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Kent on Sunday

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An increase in violence is casting a shadow over the summer

By Marijke Cox
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Special KoS Report

AS the county reflects on a glorious summer, we can reveal the darker side to the sunshine.

Police have been forced to step up patrols in a bid to curb trouble on our streets, even our beaches, and there has been a worrying spike in domestic violence.

And the one common denominator is alcohol.

While many have revelled in two months of good weather after a long, cold winter, others fell out of control courtesy of the intoxicating blend of booze and sun.

All of which created a cocktail of trouble on our streets and in our homes.

Kent Police insists the county remains safe – with figures released in July showing a 2.4 per cent drop in assaults and public order offences – but the force admits that the hot weather does cause a rise in the number of incidents.

Excessive drinking, the force says, can decrease people's awareness of what is going on around them, increasing the chances of them becoming a victim or being drawn into fights.

On the weekend of July 26-28, some 126 arrests were made for violent crime; August 2-4, 138 arrests, August 9-11, 139 arrests; August 16-18, 111 arrests; and August 23-25, 80 arrests.

The figures suggest the blitz on such crime, with officers out in numbers in town centres historically linked with violent crime, did the job, with numbers decreasing over the last three weekends.

Chief Inspector Lee Russell explained: "Violent crime is linked to the night

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DO YOU KNOW WHAT LIVES IN OUR SEAS?

MARINE LIFE: From dolphins to sharks, whales to rays; all off our coast – **SEE INSIDE**

HEALTH

Hospital food scores poorly

IT WILL come as little surprise to many, but the county's hospital food is failing to delight patients' tastebuds, according to a new report.

What's more, one of our hospitals received one of the worst scores in the entire UK on the quality of its menu for inpatients. **PAGE 8**

ENVIRONMENT

Tempers flare in beach battle

A REMARKABLE row over the ownership of one of the county's most popular stretches of beach shows no signs of slowing.

In a special report, we look at the long-running saga over the beach at Whitstable as landowners lock horns again with campaigners. **PAGE 18**

POLITICS

Farage to run as Kent MP?

UKIP'S charismatic leader Nigel Farage has dropped a heavy hint he could stand for Westminister in Kent at the 2015 General Election.

The politician, who lives in the county, saw his party score big gains in May's county council elections, coming second only to the Tories. **PAGE 26**

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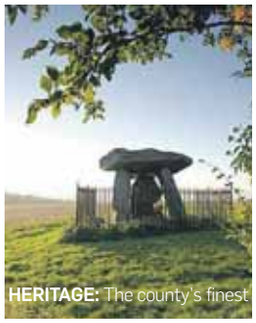

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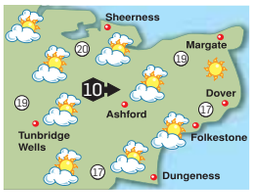

TODAY: A fine day with good sunny periods. Light winds. Max temp 17-20C (63-68F). **TONIGHT:** Cool and dry with clear spells. Min temp 10-13C (50-55F).

TODAY'S HIGH TIDE (Metres)

Dover	09.16	5.5	21.45	5.6
Margate	10.03	4.0	22.34	4.1
St Mary's	02.41	4.3	15.09	4.6

WEEK AHEAD

Monday	Max 22C	Min 11C
Tuesday	Max 23C	Min 10C
Wednesday	Max 23C	Min 11C
Thursday	Max 25C	Min 12C
Friday	Max 20C	Min 11C
Saturday	Max 20C	Min 10C

Information supplied by MeteoGroup

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CRIME

Police are taking a robust approach to summer violence, but remind us not to be afraid despite the seasonal spike

Continued from front page

time economy and when there is hot weather you do get some people out drinking excessively.

"We do specific operations at key points in the year; so during the summer and Christmas, when there's an increase of people who wish to go out and drink, sometimes to excess.

"Summer weather can increase problems and so we've focused our operation on that."

This means not only tackling those in pubs in the evenings and late at night, but people enjoying themselves a bit too much during the day.

He added: "We see issues on beaches in the early afternoons. Sometimes people are drunk before we get anywhere near them.

"We do a lot of increased visibility policing, reminding people to be sensible.

"In the majority of cases, people are going out to have a good time and enjoy themselves, not to go and get in a fight.

"If we get abuse, we direct them to leave.

"We are the police and we take a robust approach and that's what people in Kent want."

Kent has the biggest Community Alcohol Partnership in the country, where authorities work together and with retailers to prevent booze-related problems.

"The message is; serve drinks, not drunks," said Ch Insp Russell.

He stressed, however, that it was the responsibility of the individual to drink sensibly.

He said: "They can help us help them by drinking responsibly.

"We're there to let people enjoy themselves, but if there is a problem then we will step in.

"We see problems where people aren't looking after themselves, like walking in the road, falling into rivers.

"Our aim is to keep Kent a safe place."

But it's not just in the pubs and streets where trouble can be found.

Worryingly, with the arrival of summer and the hot weather, the number of domestic violence incidents rises.

In fact, Ch Insp Russell says, this makes up the highest proportion of all violent crime.

And, unsurprisingly, much of it is linked to booze.

"Domestic abuse is a big part of all the violence we deal with," he said.

"It's sometimes difficult to manage as a lot of the time it's behind closed doors. Work is being carried out to build confidence and offer support for victims so they contact us."

But despite the seasonal spike, it's worth remembering Kent towns have no more of a problem than others in the country and in many cases, perhaps less.

Knife crime is low and gun crime almost non-existent.

But for victims, the consequences of violent crime can be devastating.

Chief Constable Ian Learmonth said he is looking to combat all violent crime and is particularly focused on bringing domestic abuse offenders to justice quickly.

He is currently pushing to have a special court for this purpose.

He explained: "With the Crown Prosecution Service we are exploring how to bring offenders to justice more quickly.

"We are looking to see whether it is possible to have dedicated courts for domestic violence.

"This would help us reduce delays which sometimes cause the victim to withdraw their complaint."

■ **Pubs are cashing in on the good weather with many reporting record takings. See our special report inside.**

COMING UP IN THE NEXT MONTH

Business Quarter
September 15
All the latest business news and the movers and shakers shaping the county's economy

Education
September 22
Ensure your child gets the best possible start in life by keeping up to date with their learning.

Festive parties
September 29
It may seem like a long way off, but don't miss our guide to the best Christmas parties

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CONTEST

Getting in a flap to capture winning photo

A LECTURER at the University of Kent is celebrating after this striking image won her top prize in a national photographic competition.

Dr Zoe Davies, a senior lecturer in biodiversity conservation, was judged top in the 2013 British Ecological Society's centenary photographic competition.

The picture captures a pair of black-browed albatrosses greeting one another.

It was taken on the cliff top of Saunders Island in the Falkland Islands, where Dr Davies was working with a range of organisations to develop a protected area strategy.

Dr Davies, part of the university's Durrell Institute of Conservation Ecology, said: "This is one of my favourite species on the archipelago – the adults are beautifully elegant and a real pleasure to watch as they soar past on the wing.

"These charismatic birds are an endangered species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (ICON) Red List. But the good news is that recent surveys have shown their numbers are increasing."

The photograph saw her pick up £750.

POLITICS

MPs rebel on Syria vote

THREE of the county's MPs were among 30 Conservatives to rebel against David Cameron on Thursday night and shoot down the option of possible military action in Syria.

Chatham and Aylesford MP Tracey Crouch, Sittingbourne and Sheppey's Gordon Henderson and Gravesham MP Adam Holloway all voted against.

The motion was defeated by a 13-vote majority.

TRAFFIC

Towers scheme back?

IT CAUSED controversy before and now it could return after it was revealed the Westgate Towers in Canterbury could be closed again in a bid to ease the city's traffic woes.

Despite a trial scheme being ditched in April, closing the historic towers to traffic is set to be one option considered during a public consultation tackling the issue.

ART

Gallery's one millionth

TURNER Contemporary chiefs were celebrating on Thursday after the art gallery in Margate welcomed its one millionth visitor - just over two years since it first opened.

The gallery is seen as a key catalyst in the ongoing revival of the seaside town and which will be further enhanced when the Dreamland site re-opens as a heritage amusement park.

CRIME

Probe into P&O chef death amid claims of 'cling film sex game'

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

DETECTIVES investigating the death of a man apparently involved in a bizarre sex game which went tragically wrong say they are waiting on toxicology reports before drawing any conclusions.

It has been widely reported that Alun Williams, 47, from Shepherdswell, died after being wrapped in cling film.

He was found dead at a property in East Street in Tower Hamlets, Dover, on August 20 at 6am.

It emerged this week that Mr Williams was head chef on a cross-Channel ferry for P&O.

Police have so far remained tight-lipped over the cause of death while investigations continue.

Two men, aged 21 and 34, and both believed to be from the area, have been arrested. They are on police bail until November 7.

P&O Ferries spokesman Brian Rees said: "At this stage it is an unexplained death and remains under police investigation.

"I think all we can say at the moment is this is a desperately sad loss of a colleague.

"We express our thoughts for his family and friends. He was well known to the staff here, where he worked as head chef."

Kent Police said Mr Williams' family was being kept updated on the investigation process.

A force spokesman added: "A post mortem has been carried out, but we are now having to wait for the results of the various associated tests before any final conclusions can be drawn."

The act of being wrapped tightly like a mummy is a fetish thought to have been made popular in Japan.

It is often known as 'mummified bondage' and while the use of cling film, or saran wrap, is common, other materials like bandages can be used to give the participant a feeling of complete confinement and helplessness by physically restricting them.

A degree of auto-erotic asphyxiation can sometimes be used when the face is also covered or wrapped.

It is not without risk however. Famous victims of auto-erotic asphyxiation are said to include INXS singer Michael Hutchence, MP Stephen Milligan and Kung Fu actor David Carradine.

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TRAVEL

Use the A249? Then get ready for 11 weeks of delays and disruption

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

MOTORISTS are being warned to expect delays and disruption as major water main repair work takes place along the busy A249 between Maidstone and Sittingbourne.

Following a number of bursts, South East Water is to replace a 730-metre long section of pipeline along the A249 between the junctions of Hayes Lane and Steps Hill Road.

This is between the County Showground at Detling and the busy Stockbury junction of the M2 motorway.

There will be lane closures and speed restrictions when the work, which is expected to take nearly three months to complete, begins later this month.

James Smith, delivery manager at South East Water, said: "To ensure motorists can continue using the A249 while we install this new pipeline, lane closures and speed restrictions will be in operation.

"There will also be a period when Steps Hill Road will be temporarily closed at the junction with the A249. During this time a diversion route will be in operation and clearly signed.

"I would like to apologise to motorists and the local community for any inconvenience this essential work will cause."

Construction is due to start on Monday, September 9 and take about 11 weeks to complete.

ROADS

A2 resurfacing begins

THERE will be delays too for motorists when a six-week resurfacing scheme begins in Canterbury on Monday.

The work will involve overnight carriageway closures and temporary closures of lay-bys between the Harbledown and Bridge junctions.

It is due to be completed on October 14.

Anita Waterton, of the Highways Agency, said: "We've planned the work when traffic flows are lowest, to minimise the disruption."

COUNCIL

Leader's open letter

BROMLEY Council's leader has written an open letter to residents urging them to attend public meetings about how the authority intends to tackle a further £55 million slash to its budget.

Stephen Carr says the reduction over the next four years – hot on the heels of additional big cuts in recent years – will mean a "smaller role" for the council as it faces some "very difficult decision".

Meetings run from September 26 to October 4.

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NATURE

Look what lurks in

Marijke Cox and Chris Murphy dive into the

IF YOU'VE just returned from relaxing in front of a turquoise sea, rich in brightly coloured fish and vibrant coral, you could be forgiven for not looking upon the English Channel or North Sea with quite the same relish when it comes to wildlife.

Courtesy of the weather, the waters which surround Kent are often cold and dull-looking; with the perception that its wildlife stretches merely to crabs, cockles and cod.

But you underestimate the stretch of water at your peril.

Because it is the coming together of the two stretches of water which creates fertile seas and a staggering array of creatures.

Beneath the surface is a huge selection of if not stunning, then at least ecologically important and interesting species one would perhaps not expect so close to home.

Did you know, for example, that sharks are regular visitors?

Before swimmers run screaming from the water, the majority are harmless. But if you go looking, you can find shark species such as dogfish, catsharks and smooth hounds.

But bigger and more well known species can also be found – albeit rarely – off our coast.

Blue sharks, in particular, have been known to visit the deep waters off Ramsgate. Attacks on humans by this species are rare, with just 13 recorded globally.

Their bite is unlikely to prove fatal although they boast a set of sharp, serrated teeth.

This species, found off every continent except Antarctica, is on the threatened list, with 10-20 million each year killed as a result of fishing.

Fisherman David Hancock, who runs Kent Charter Fishing from Ramsgate, said he has seen some up to six foot long.

"From the late spring through to the autumn we have a large run of tope sharks and blue sharks within easy reach of Ramsgate Royal Harbour," he said.

"In 2011 we were the top boat in Kent and Essex, regularly catching 10 to 20 sharks a day."

He stressed all the fish are returned to the sea.

Tope sharks, which, like the blue, have the chilling shape and fin of the archetypal shark, are also found off Kent, but are harmless to us.

A spokesman for the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) said other sharks potentially seen would be the harmless basking shark and porbeagles.

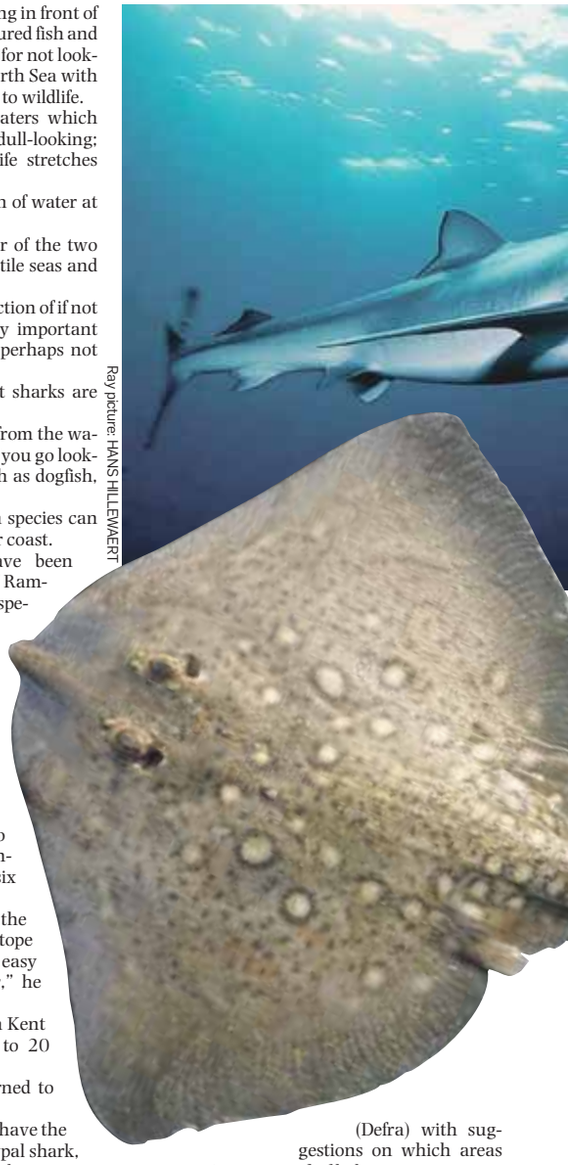
Kent Charter Fishing said the Goodwin Sands, off Deal, offer skate and thornback rays, with Margate boasting thornbacks, seabass and cod.

While some may not see the beauty of our seas, others have worked hard to mobilise plans for four marine conservation zones (MCZ) to be set up to protect fish and other marine life.

Just last week, conservationists from the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) revealed the findings of a groundbreaking survey which uncovered a staggering 708 seals living around the Thames Estuary, along the south east Kent coastline and in creeks and rivers.

These MCZs wll help protect them from disturbance and the impact of over fishing.

Kent Wildlife Trust was integral in seeing the plans pushed forward, bringing together more than 2,000 supporters to bombard the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) with suggestions on which areas are in most need of help.



Ray picture: HANS HILLEWAERT

In 2011, the Government received dozens of recommendations nationally, including 11 in Kent. Plans for just four from that group are now moving forward; the Medway Estuary, Thanet Coast, Folkestone Pomerania and Hythe Bay. A final decision will be announced in the autumn.

Bryony Chapman, the trust's marine police officer, told us: "We will welcome these zones. They are important for the conservation of all the various species in our waters.

"The stalked jellyfish and seahorse which had been found just outside Dover harbour are both highlighted specifically for protection in the zones.

"There is a huge diversity of life in the seas around Kent and the rest of the country, but it is declining under the pressure of a whole range of human activities.

"The network of zones is designed to ensure we have a network of safe havens where examples of each of our different marine habitats and species are protected from damage and can recover to health."

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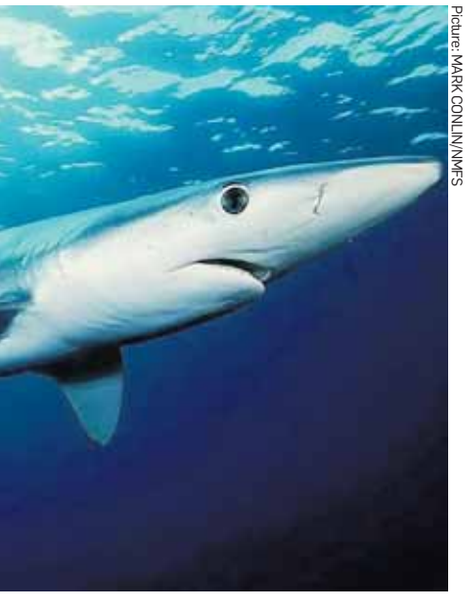
waters off our coast

surprising mix of marine life living in our seas



Picture: MARK CONLIN/NNMFS

DIVERSE: From top left: Blue shark, dogfish, brown crab, dahlia anemone, painted topshells, seal and thornback ray

Ms Chapman said Kent gets a variety of sponges of all colours and shapes, anemones, sea snails, sea slugs, seasquirts, starfish, sea urchins, crabs, lobsters, shrimps, prawns, oysters, mussels and reefs made from the tubes of tiny rossworms.

"We also have a lovely array of seaweeds on the shore and shallow waters," she said.

"There is a huge variety of fish, from the tompot blenny living in reef crevices, to the dogfish, as well as eels, cod, sand eels, plaice, sole, dab, flounder, lumpsucker fish, pipefish and seahorses."

James Salmon runs sea safaris from Dover.

He too stressed how important the conservation zones will be to our coast.

"They will be great for us – I just hope the Government doesn't see this as a chance to charge us a hefty fee for a licence to carry on work," he said. "Our seal spotting tours are very popular, and we are unique in Kent in that we are the only company that takes sightseers to the White Cliffs of Dover to see the caves and wrecks there.

"We also go to the Goodwin Sands, so it would be very sad if someone in charge decides to price us out of business."

The MCS said originally 127 sites were put forward around the UK and these were whittled down to 31 after a public consultation.

MCS says where the cold water of the North Sea meets the warmer water of the western Channel, marine life thrives.

Plants and animals colonise the numerous wrecks which provide a welcome hard surface to attach to in a typically sandy environment.

MCS pointed out this is also a great region to see the intricate reef communities built by the humble honeycomb worm.

Melissa Moore, MCS senior policy officer, said: "For a government prioritising economic recovery, the creation of MCZs is a policy it should be fully supporting.

"The secretary of state has made no secret of the simplicity of his mandate from the Prime Minister – to grow the rural economy, and simultaneously protect and enhance our natural capital. MCZs represent the most urgent, and most immediate opportunity, to deliver on this.

"Every day of further delays results in more of these sites being damaged by trawling and dredging.

"We think they are making a grave error in not backing the full network. Our campaign for a world class network of MCZs continues."

OCCASIONAL SPECIAL VISITORS

In addition to the regular visitors to the county's coastline, Kent has also had some very special guests.

Perhaps most famous was the dolphin who lived close to the shore in Sandgate, near Folkestone. Originally spotted in 2006, Dave, as he was quickly coined (and ultimately changed to Davina when it was pointed out he was in fact a she), spent some 18 months providing visitors with the remarakble sight of a dolphin leaping out of the water.

By the end of 2007, sightings stopped. It is not known if she opted to swim out to find her pod, or had developed an injury.

In addition, there have been other big creatures coming close to shore accidentally.

Earlier this year, a 36ft humpback whale was found floating off Sheppey.

In 2011, a 45ft sperm whale washed up on the beach at Pegwell Bay, near Ramsgate, while later the same year a 25ft minke whale washed up over Christmas in Westgate.

A 28ft humpback whale was also spotted off Gravesend in 2009, before washing up near the Dartford bridge.

Experts believe they had been seeking fish in the North Sea, before getting into difficulty. The tide then sweeping them towards Kent.

In 1995 a killer whale found itself stranded at Pegwell Bay, while in 2008 there were sightings of the mammals off the Folkestone coast.

Most famously, in 2006, a seven-tonne bottle nosed whale swam up the Thames Estuary into central London before becoming stranded.

With fading health – it had been unable to feed for days – the whale was transported by boat back to the open seas, with a view to releasing it off the coast of Margate. It died en route, however.

UP CLOSE: Dave/Davina the dolphin (top); Sperm whale at Pegwell Bay (above); Minke whale at Westgate (below)

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HERITAGE

Chance to visit Dickens' former home gets closer as top school moves out

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

THE former home of celebrated author Charles Dickens is to be opened to the public for the first time since his death in 1870.

Current owner Gad's Hill Independent School is opening the Grade I-listed Georgian Gad's Hill Place in Higham, near Rochester, following the completion of the first phase of a major multi-million pound project to build two new schools in the grounds of the old house.

Gad's Hill Place, where Dickens penned classics including Great Expectations and A Tale of Two Cities, has been used by the school for teaching since the 1920s.

The school dining hall was where the author died, while the headmaster's office was his study.

But headmaster David Craggs said the fragile 18th century building can no longer keep up with the "demands of modern day education" and instead students will be taught in the two new state-of-the-art schools.

Mr Craggs said: "Ninety years ago John Burt brought Gad's Hill Place to convert it into a residential school.

"Since then, thousands of children have had the rare honour of being able to learn English in what was Charles Dickens' bedroom.

"While I will miss the unique privilege of running a school from the great man's own study, I feel that we have built a new school of the highest quality and standard that the 21st century can provide, which is only right for our truly outstanding students.

"I feel certain that in 90 years time, everyone involved in the school will look back and be proud of the values and the building they have inherited."

The John Melville Building – named after the school's chair of governors – will be officially opened on September 4 by Marion Dickens, Dickens' great-great-granddaughter and trustee of the charity due to take over Gad's Hill Place, and Dickens' great-great-great-grandson Harry Lloyd, who starred as Viserys Targaryen in hit television programme Game of Thrones.

Marion Dickens will work through the charity on a series of refurbishment projects on Gad's Hill Place.

She said: "Since the house was turned into a school, public access to it has been very limited.

"Now, for the first time, people who love the books will be able to visit his home."

The new school will span two floors and boast a sports hall, theatre and dining area, as well as performance spaces.

John Melville, said: "This school which we have been building over the last few years is having a major impact on the community it serves.

"Gad's is committed to teaching our young people in buildings fit for the 21st century."

Renovation work will now take place on the old house ahead of it being opened for the public. A date for opening has not yet been set.

VISIT: Until recently only school pupils got to experience the inside of Charles Dickens' former home, Gad's Hill Place

THE AUTHOR IN KENT

Charles Dickens held Kent in a very special part of his heart.

Originally born in Portsmouth, he moved to Chatham when he was four, where his father worked at the dockyard.

As a young boy, Charles Dickens, while walking with his father, is famously quoted as once looking upon Gad's Hill Place and declaring one day he would like to live there. His father told him that if he were to work hard, perhaps one day he would.

After leaving Chatham aged 11, he would return to spend his honeymoon in Chalk, near Gravesend, aged 24.

He and his family would holiday in Broadstairs – using the local Fort House as the basis of Bleak House, the name of which it eventually adopted.

At the height of his success, he fulfilled a childhood goal by buying Gad's Hill Place as a family home. He would remain there until his death in 1870 aged just 58.

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HEALTH

Quality of hospital food is under the spotlight

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

IT'S the stuff of culinary nightmares, but it seems attempts over the years to improve hospital food have done little for its reputation.

In fact, findings by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) show that in 2012 almost half of all patients at Kent's hospitals were, if not unhappy, then at least underwhelmed by what was served up.

The findings from the CQC, from data collated in 2012 and released this week by the Campaign for Better Hospital Food, show only 5.2 patients out of every 10 could describe their food as good.

And that was the highest rating of all the hospitals in Kent.

At Medway Maritime Hospital, the number was four – the second lowest in the country.

Health chiefs in Medway, however, have defended the statistics, stating that since July this year, all patients have been able to choose from an "improved and flexible" menu.

Head of facilities, Jane Walden, said Medway NHS Foundation Trust, which runs the hospital in Gillingham, had undertaken a formal tendering process which involved taster days and included dieticians, patients and others involved in patient care.

REPORT: At best, just 50 per cent of patients felt they had good hospital food

This, she says, was to enable the trust to make an informed choice about selecting a new supplier for inpatient meals.

She explained: "We've worked really hard to look at the day-to-day comments we get from patients on wards, as well as the National Inpatient Survey results, to deliver a menu that offers choice and meets personal preferences whilst ensuring the meals served are nutritionally balanced to support patient recovery.

"There has been a focus on improving the quality of the meals we serve to our patients."

She said high energy soups, diverse cultural options, jacket potatoes and fillings along with roast dinners were among the dishes on offer.

She added: "There are lots more we want to do to further improve patient experience during mealtimes and one of the areas we are looking at, with our nutrition nurse specialist, is the development of pictorial menus for dementia and any other special needs requirements."

In the CQC data, all hospitals fared well in terms of choice, with some 80 per cent of patients stating they had been offered a choice of food.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, which runs Tunbridge Wells Hospital and Maidstone Hospital, came out top of all the Kent hospitals, with 5.2 of every 10 patients rating food good.

A trust spokesman said: "It is pleasing to see that our patients recognise the high quality and good choice of meals available to them.

"We routinely check the nutritional value of meals served to ensure they meet patient requirements and carry out taste tests."

East Kent Hospitals' University NHS Foundation Trust, which looks after the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital in Margate, Kent and Canterbury, and William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, saw 5.1 of every 10 patients rate food as good.

An East Kent spokesman said: "Since the inpatient survey was conducted nearly 12 months ago, the trust has been working hard to improve its food satisfaction scores with patients.

"We ask 500-1,000 patients a month about their experiences and follow up any wards with low scores with the ward manager.

"During the last year significant changes have been made, including the introduction of Serco as the new catering supplier.

"This change brought the opportunity to introduce significant benefits for patients in how we deliver meals at our hospitals."

Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust, which runs Darent Valley Hospital, saw 4.5 in 10 rate food good.

The Campaign for Better Hospitals has accused hospitals of routinely awarding themselves a high rating for the quality of their patient meals despite findings by the CQC.

The group said annual assessments carried out by hospital staff show 99 per cent of patient meals with a "good" rating, which is in stark contract to the CQC findings.

Coordinator of the campaign, Alex Jackson, said: "It is time for the Government to come clean about the sorry state of hospital food in England and set mandatory standards for patient meals."

FIRE

Dry summer means just one spark could lead to devastation

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

FIREFIGHTERS fear it is only a matter of time before tragedy strikes as the long, hot summer turns huge swathes of the countryside into a tinderbox, ready to ignite.

The emergency services are currently tackling close to 100 fires in crops, grassland and heathland every week across Kent and admit many are being sparked by people not taking care with the dry ground.

That's almost double the number recorded last year.

And every time a barbecue or disgarded cigarette butt causes a fire, crews are being diverted from tackling major incidents where lives may be at risk.

Just this week, fire crews have had to deal with separate incidents of hay bales on fire on Sheppey and another involving scrubland in Thanet.

But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Firefighters have tackled more than 760 fires in outdoor areas including woodland, grassland and rubbish heaps since July 1.

Last year's wetter, cooler summer saw just 408 such fires over the same period.

It has sparked warnings from Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) for people to take extra care not to start fires. It warns not only does it kill precious habitat and devastate wildlife, it can cause a very real threat to people's homes and safety.

Head of community safety at KFRS, Stuart Skilton, said: "We are appealing to people to ensure they take extra care not to start fires, whether it is simply disposing of cigarettes and other rubbish in a responsible manner, to being fire safe with outdoor activities such as camping and barbecuing.

"During the summer, outdoor fires are a major issue for our crews as they can spread easily and destroy thousands of acres of countryside, crops and wildlife habitats.

"This puts enormous demands on our resources as well as posing a serious threat to lives and homes."

In just five days during August, firefighters were called to eight separate fires in Thanet, including a blazing field, dumped rubbish set alight and unattended bonfires.

Fire chiefs fear it is only a matter of time before an incident causes major damage and possibly casualties.

Margate crew manager Shaun Humphries said it was important for people to realise that outdoor fires can be unpredictable and behave differently depending on the weather.

"They can spread very quickly and divert crews away from other incidents such as road crashes and house fires, where lives may be in danger," he said.

Many of the summer's fires have been caused by rubbish being dumped, offering an easy target for arsonists, or people trying to burn their waste.

Mr Humphries said: "Rather than setting fire to your rubbish, take it to the local tip or contact the council for advice on how to dispose of it.

"There's no need to burn it or dump it where it can act as a potential fire hazard and be targeted by arsonists."

Luckily, there have been no severe injuries caused by the summer's outdoor fires, but it's only a matter of time.

Acres of crops have been destroyed – three acres in West Malling just last week – and hay bales on Sheppey and Ramsgate this week, leaving farmers out of pocket.

Large swathes of picturesque woodland have also been destroyed.

Wainscott, near the Hoo Peninsula, saw two fires in less than a month in the same woodland, with firefighters spending hours in both cases trying to bring the flames under control. The first was believed to have been caused by a camp fire. The second covered 120 metres of land.

The issue is expected to quieten as the autumn approaches but with the possibility of an Indian summer, it could continue into September.

DEATH

Shopper has heart attack in the Pantiles

SHOPPERS were left stunned after a man suffered a heart attack in the middle of one of the county's most historic shopping centres.

Emergency crews fought in vain to save the life of the man who collapsed in the Pantiles, in Tunbridge Wells, at around 2pm on Tuesday, as anxious passers-by looked on.

A spokesman for Kent Police, who attended the incident, said the man was pronounced dead at the scene.

CRIME

Cops in early morning drug raids in Medway

A SERIES of early morning drug raids in Medway resulted in four arrests.

It followed months of intelligence gathering on suspected drugs networks.

Five addresses were searched in Chatham and Gillingham by the Metropolitan Police's Trident Gang Crime Command.

A 32-year-old was bailed until October 10, two 28-year-olds cautioned and a woman, 54, received a penalty notice.

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ENVIRONMENT

Campaigners urged not to let up to ensure future of most treasured sites

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

COMMUNITY activism is helping to protect the Green Belt in our county – but conservationists warn we must not rest on our laurels in the on-going fight to stop our green and pleasant land from being over developed.

While Kent is leading the way in putting a stop to inappropriate development, as demonstrated in Gravesham where plans to build thousands of homes on greenbelt land were scrapped last year following public opposition, environmental campaigners say the threat is ever present.

A report this week by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) showed the number of sites under threat across the UK's Green Belt (see box off for definition) has almost doubled in a year.

And although Kent was excluded from the map of at-risk areas, the report has done little to stifle local fears that development could creep onto cherished land.

Jamie Weir, from CPRE Protect Kent, stressed that while there may not be massive developments currently planned for our Green Belt, which is located in areas including Sevenoaks and Dartford, it did not mean communities could rest easy.

He said: "Kent is under significant pressure from house building and development both within the Green Belt and on a wide array of greenfield spaces throughout the county.

"We are constantly fighting inappropriate and unsustainable development proposals throughout the county, and with the increasing housing pressure we are seeing a rise in greenbelt designated land and greenfield development proposals coming to fruition."

Currently, district and borough councils across Kent are drawing up or seeing their Local Plans approved. This is an important document setting out plans for growth up to the year 2031.

There's no denying local authority planning chiefs are in a difficult position; trying to balance the need for new housing with the need to protect the Garden of England.

Many have stressed they will prioritise brownfield sites for development, but with a huge need for housing in some districts, it seems almost inevitable some will end up on greenfield sites and in some cases, possibly the Green Belt.

Campaigners in Maidstone are currently battling for the protection of greenfield land after the council unveiled the need to build 14,500 houses. The council insists it will always prioritise brownfield sites.

Fears are the historical city of Canterbury, which has a plan for 15,000 new homes, could also see areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) or greenfield land built on.

Development proposals for Dover, including the building of more than 600 homes in the Kent Downs AONB, were approved in June.

One glimmer of hope, however, is that the Government recently issued a written ministerial statement stressing that the single issue of housing demand did not in itself justify building on the Green Belt.

Senior planning campaigner for CPRE, Paul Miner, said: "Ministers saying the Green Belt is not being given the level of protection they expected is a welcome recognition of the problem.

"But the extent to which the threat is growing – nearly doubling in a year nationally – is deeply worrying. It should not be necessary to build on greenbelt land when there is enough brownfield land available.

"Greenbelts prevent urban sprawl and are the green lungs of many of our largest or most historic towns and cities.

"Ministers need to go further. Hard decisions are needed to help ensure both urban regeneration and protection of the Green Belt."

GREEN LUNGS: Greenfield sites are an important part of the landscape

WHAT IS THE GREEN BELT?

Kent actually has relatively little officially designated Green Belt.

Designed to prevent urban sprawl and, in the south east, the expansion of London into the Home Counties, the Metropolitan Green Belt rings the capital, running through the districts of Bromley, Dartford, Gravesham, Maidstone, Tonbrige, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks.

Elsewhere in the county are what are known as greenfield sites – undeveloped land which can range from agricultural fields to sites left to evolve naturally.

Developers generally prefer greenfield sites as brownfield land often involve clean-up costs before work can start.

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WILDLIFE

No badger cull expected here, as opinion is split

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A CONTROVERSIAL pilot scheme to cull badgers has been blasted by an MP who claims there is no scientific evidence it will prevent bovine tuberculosis.

Tracey Crouch, Conservative member for Chatham and Aylesford, is furious the go-ahead has finally been given to shoot 5,000 badgers in Somerset and Gloucestershire, with high-powered rifles.

Ms Crouch said: "It is a sad day and one not backed by science or assessment."

However, while the row intensifies, it is extremely unlikely any extension of the cull would include Kent.

The National Farmers' Union said the county has a low number of cattle and therefore is unlikely to be affected.

NFU spokesman William White said: "We are pleased to see the cull has started.

"This needs to happen to get this disease under control.

"I don't foresee a cull in Kent because there are so few cattle. The cull in the south west is important, however, to prevent a spread of bovine TB.

"They do not have a larger number of badgers than anyone else, but they have the potential to affect more cows in that part of the country."

He said farmers 20 years ago had at most two badger setts on their land. Now it is up to 15.

Damian Green, Conservative MP for Ashford, added: "We have been lucky in Kent so far that we have not seen bovine TB destroying our dairy herds, but farmers in Kent will have great sympathy with their counterparts in the West Country who have been severely hit by this.

"It is regrettably necessary to carry out these pilots. Evidence from other parts of the world show the policy works to help eradicate bovine TB."

Defra scientists believe a cull will reduce the number of new cases of TB in herds by 12-to-16 per cent in nine years.

Hugh Robertson, Conservative MP for Faversham, added: "There are relatively few cattle herds in Kent. Livestock tends to predominate in the west of the country whereas in Kent agriculture is more fruit and crops based. I am a government minister so support government policy, which is to conduct a test cull."

The RSPCA said it is deeply saddened and remains committed to stopping the "misguided attempt" to control the disease.

The charity also criticised the use of guns because badger anatomy makes it difficult to make an instant kill.

RSPCA chief executive Gavin Grant said: "As we speak, thousands of innocent animals are being culled in our countryside – and we do not know the extent of their suffering or how humane the methods being used to kill them are.

"It is very likely many of them are lying injured, suffering a painful death. We fear we could well receive an influx of calls to come to their rescue."

The Country Land and Business Association speaks for land owners in Kent. Its president, Harry Cotterell, said: "Managing badgers is an essential part of the strategy seeking to eradicate this terrible disease from livestock and wildlife in England.

"Bovine TB in England has already cost the taxpayer an estimated £500m in the past decade, and, without a wildlife control programme including the cull, this would rise to around £1bn over the next 10 years."

BOVINE TB

Rising steadily since the 1980s, bovine TB causes serious respiratory problems to cattle contracting the illness.

In the UK, farms are tested every four years. Any cattle with the illness are destroyed to prevent it spreading.

There is scientific proof which links the spread of bTB from badgers to cattle, cattle to badgers and cattle to cattle.

However, the crux of the argument is how big a role badgers play in spreading the illness. Opponents of the cull say it is cattle-to-cattle contact which spreads the disease.

Disputed research suggests a cull will reduce – but by no means eradicate – bTB in cattle.

Two pilot schemes began this week, with some 5,000 badgers set to be shot by trained marksmen.

The debate continues.

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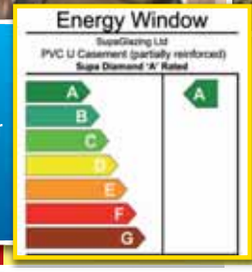

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BUSINESS

Cheers! Pubs raise a glass to long hot summer

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

GOOD TIMES: The Waggon at Hale and the Beacon are two of the pubs that have been enjoying a rise in custom during the welcome hot weather

AS temperatures soared this summer, optimism in the previously ailing pub industry rocketed as people ditched cheap supermarket booze in favour of the quintessentially British beer garden.

Landlords across the county were – and still are – reporting significant hikes in the number of customers with tills ringing to the tune of much-needed profits.

The summer's heatwave and subsequent dash for a cold pint could not have come at a better time, with some 26 pubs closing every week in the UK, according to the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). And Kent has failed to escape the scythe of the Grim Reaper with many a boarded-up pub on our streets and in our villages; casualties of the smoking ban, recession and trolley-fulls of cheap supermarket alcohol.

But we're now seeing the effects of what a beautiful summer can bring, with many pubs previously on death's door now ready to face the coming quieter months with a new lease of life.

John Haywood, manager of The Green Man, near Wrotham, said trade had risen significantly compared to last summer's washout.

He explained: "Over the last 18 months we'd started to see problems; people had less steady incomes, costs of energy, petrol, oil, gas, electricity have all been going up and so people weren't coming to the pub anymore.

"Things were looking bad; we were having to pump money into it.

"But the last eight or nine weeks have been amazing. We're seeing a rise of at least 75 per cent. Even on our quietest nights, Mondays and Tuesdays, we're full.

"The other Monday I had to go upstairs to get more chairs. I'm hoping for an Indian summer so it continues."

While Mr Haywood admitted it was the weather helping bring in the punters, he said it wasn't just down to that.

"I think the economy is moving forward. We had tradesmen in here who couldn't get work and now they're getting work again," he said.

"Pubs are also doing what they can to attract people with things like quiz nights and music."

Whether it will be enough to save the iconic British pub remains to be seen, but a sunny outlook certainly seems to be on the horizon.

"We've had an extremely good summer," said Matt Prout from The Gate in Chislett, near Canterbury. "Trade has trebled. We get local people but mainly it's visitors who are passing or staying in the campsites nearby.

"It helps that we get families coming in for food. We don't make money on beer because of the tax."

It seems food is becoming the saviour of the pub, with many landlords admitting they make little money on drink.

Scott Houghton, manager of the Mayfly in Hawkinge, said that's what attracts his customers: "We survive because of the amount of food we do. We used to make money on drink but now? No chance.

"We've seen a rise in customers. The numbers had been going down but it's on the up again, this summer and last."

In a desperate bid to boost numbers – particularly with the hot weather – landlords are going to great lengths to offer family fun events.

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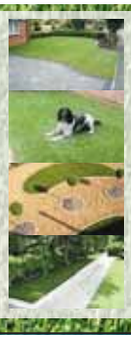

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as weather fuels much-needed boost in trade

Owner of the Waggon at Hale in Chatham, Emma Pearson, told us she is holding a beer festival at the end of September.

"We've seen a rise because of the weather, that's been helped as we have an outside area," she said. "It's been nice to have a good summer. It's difficult for the pub industry at the moment so this weather really helps."

But while the weather has given a boost, it's likely only temporary.

"The days of a long lunch with a bottle of wine are over," said John Cullen, owner of The Beacon in Tunbridge Wells. "People are not drinking as much these days."

He said, however, the pub in Rusthall had seen a significant hike in customers, 15 per cent on last summer and 70 per cent in the last five months.

"The summer has helped, it was needed. We do get a certain number of people visiting as it's a lovely area. We're hopefully going to see it continue."

But while publicans are hailing the summer a success for their businesses, they all agreed the winter months before Christmas will be tough.

Business lobby group the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has reported, however, that things are looking up and it's thought that while pubs may never go back to their hey-day, improved trading is on the horizon.

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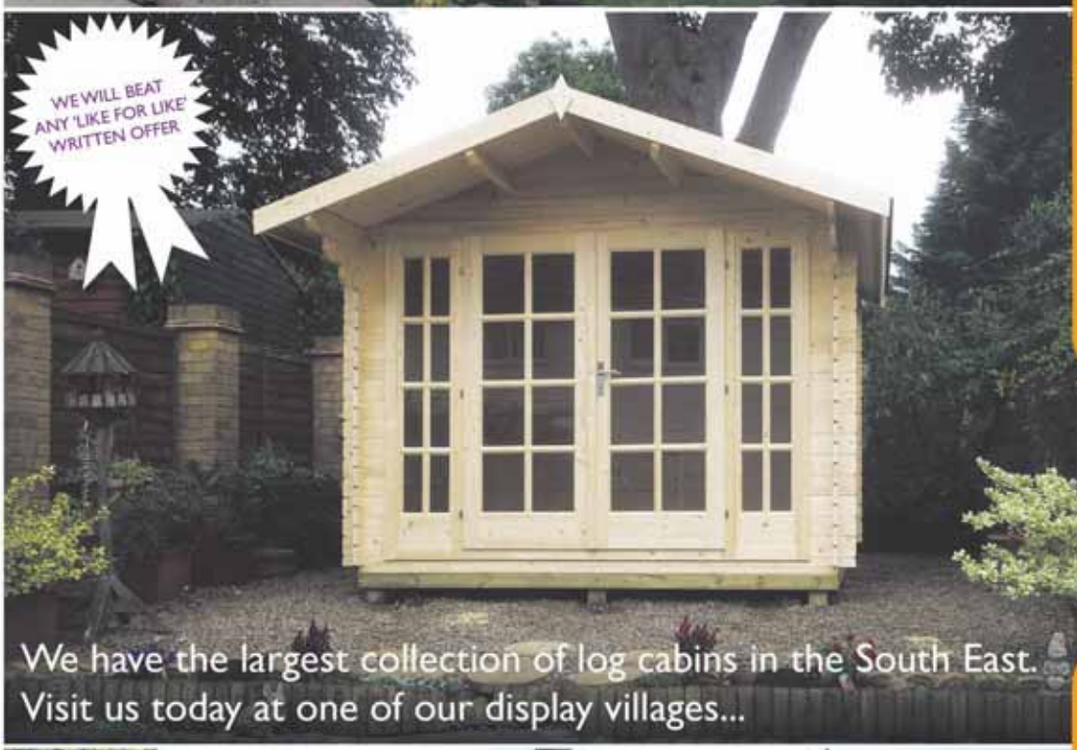

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REFURBISHMENT

Town centre bridge to close for repair work

THE Lockmeadow footbridge in Maidstone is to close for two weeks to allow for essential repairs.

The bridge, built in 1999, crosses the Medway, linking the Archbishop's Palace to the Lockmeadow complex.

It will be closed to allow engineers to carry out crucial structural checks, cleaning, redecoration and electrical repairs to lighting.

Residents and visitors are being advised to use the Town Bridge during this period.

Work begins on Monday, September 2.

TRAVEL

Golden Olympian puts her name to fast train

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

SHE won the hearts of the nation last summer when she finally delivered Olympic gold in thrilling and emotional style during the London 2012 Games.

And this week she became the latest athlete to have her efforts celebrated by the county's high-speed rail service.

Katherine Grainger, along with Anna Watkins, won gold in the double sculls at Eton Dorney – after previously winning silver in the 2000, 2004 and 2008 Games.

To mark the achievement of her and other Olympic and Paralympic stars, Southeastern is naming trains on the high-speed service in their honour.

Dr Grainger said: "It's all so surreal. I can't wait to take my Mum for a trip on my train. This in a huge honour."

HEROINE: Katherine Grainger's name is now on a Javelin train

Wayne Jenner, Southeastern's engineering director, said: "We took the train naming to an employee vote, and Katherine was a clear choice.

"Her accomplishments – representing Great Britain in four consecutive Olympic Games and countless World Championships – are nothing short of inspirational.

"We're only too pleased to permanently honour her on the side of a Javelin train."

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DEVELOPMENT

Line in the sand over beach battle

The long-running saga over the ownership of the beach at Whitstable shows no sign of calming after the latest twist. **Chris Murphy** reports

THE vibrancy of Whitstable town centre and beach is never more notable than in these days of hardship and economic strife.

The timeless, unspoilt, coastline which stretches through from Seasalter to the west, and Tankerton to its eastern fringes, has, once again this summer, acted like a honeypot for visitors from near and far.

Yet as the cash tills ring everywhere from the bike hire shop to the independent fashion boutiques, and from the fish market to the bucket and spade store, few of those pouring off the Thanet Way and into its environs will be aware of the long-running battle which has raged along its bustling, picturesque beach front.

In particular, there is a bid by one of the most powerful families in the town to develop on part of the beach itself – a move so fiercely opposed by locals, it has prompted the establishment of a campaign group, determined to ensure the beach is granted special protection.

Yet the owners insists any change to existing planning laws could threaten the town's traditional economic backbone of fishing and sailing.

This week, the Whitstable Beach Campaign won valuable support from the Open Spaces Society, the UK's oldest national conservation body, founded in 1865, which backed the granting of laws to prevent development.

That hasn't gone down well with the Green family. It has played no small part in the town's revival over the last 20 years, but has sometimes had a rocky relationship with locals through the involvement of its Whitstable Oyster Company.

The firm owns some of the town's prime sites – among them the Continental Hotel, Royal Native Oyster Stores restaurant and the Lobster Shack on the East Quay.

The Greens took over the business – originally founded in the 1400s – in 1978 when it was on its knees. Barrie Green, along with business partner John Knight, tranformed it.

When his sons, Richard and James Green, launched the fish restaurant in the old oyster stores, business rapidly picked up as its reputation spread. It proved a catalyst for regeneration.

But while a key cog in the town's rejuvenation, the company has frequently locked horns with residents. It owns around two kilometers of the beach which spans out on either side of the town's harbour (see box, right). The harbour itself is owned by Canterbury City Council.

And at the heart of the dispute is the old Red Spider cafe – once sited on the beach itself close to where the town's tennis courts are, and a stone's throw from the popular Neptune pub.

Closed during the 1970s, it fell into disrepair and was eventually demolished in the late 1980s to allow for sea defence work. But the intention was always to bring it back.

Since then, the oyster company has submitted at least two planning applications to do just that. In 1990 and again in 2003 permission was granted, but the building work never happened.

Times change, and the latest application was turned down because of fears it would result in a loss of protected open space and not be in keeping with the conservation area.

The 2010 application was for a building with a floor space of 55 square metres, up from the previous 36 square metres. Members of the city council's development control committee refused permission in March 2011.

But the town has changed since the Red Spider, and there is a strong sense that the only good development on the seafront is no development.

The Whitstable Beach Campaign, under new government rules, has submitted a request for the beach to be designated a Local Green Space, which would all but prevent development if the status is granted by the city council and adopted in its Local Plan.

Already a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and with RAMSAR designation as Wetlands of International Importance, campaigners believe this next step will afford it the protection they claim it deserves.

Paul McNally is chairman of the 10-year-old campaign group. He told KoS: "While we are pleased the council proposes that the beach should be awarded the designation of 'protection of existing open space', we feel it deserves more.

"The beach seems to fit the requirements for a Local Green Space. It is close to the community it serves; it is of particular local significance as one of Whitstable's defining landmarks; it is an urban beach which serves the locality in many

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WHO OWNS OUR COASTLINE?

Almost all of the UK's coastline is owned by the Crown – in fact it is estimated just two per cent is not. And a chunk of that lies along the north Kent coast.

Dating back to a royal charter in 1793, local oystermen were given the right to use the beach for "the better ordering and government of fishery".

As a consequence, the Whitstable Oyster Company assumed ownership – acting as a collective to the many oystermen who farmed the local oysterbeds which lay in the rich silt of the Thames Estuary before it.

When the Greens assumed control of the firm in 1978 they also acquired ownership of the beach.

It becomes such a heated topic as Whitstable does not have a traditional sea front with shops and a road.

Instead, the beach lurks behind homes and businesses making any commercial enterprise on the beach an even more sensitive subject.

ways; and it is special to the community. It would be hard to make a case for the beach being anything other than Local Green Space as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework."

Conservative councillor Ashley Clark explains: "The zone we are asking for runs from the Sportsman pub to the green gap [a protected zone which separates Whitstable and neighbouring Herne Bay], which takes in West Beach.

"If this is designated Local Green Space, it would make it harder for anyone to develop it. This is a belt-and-braces exercise."

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the stretch includes that in private ownership, the oyster company is less than impressed.

James Green, son of Barrie, told this newspaper: "Thanks for bringing this matter to our attention. As the landowner, we are obviously concerned that any move to get this beach area registered beyond the council's own planning guidelines will seriously affect the ability to use the beach for existing activities such as oyster farming, boat storage and beach replenishment."

Asked if the company intended to make another planning application to rebuild the Red Spider, he said: "Yes, at some point. We have already won two planning permissions on it.

"The only reason they knocked it down was to re-do the sea defences in about 1988.

"Our feeling is that it should have always been put back where it was. It's a public amenity if nothing else. The beach is for everyone to use and having something like that on the beach makes it easier to use."

A spokesman for Canterbury council said: "In our draft Local Plan, we make mention of the Local Green Space designation and explain what the criteria is. There has been the opportunity to put forward propsoals for such designation which we will consider."

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DEVELOPMENT

Popular garden centre set for multi-million pound redevelopment scheme

TIME FOR A CHANGE: Newnham Court would be demolished and totally rebuilt under the new plans

Waitrose has already signed up to be a part of the rebuilt complex

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

PLANS go on show next week revealing ambitious multi-million pound designs for a Maidstone shopping complex, which would see the existing site demolished and a major new development put in its place.

The proposals are to transform the Newnham Court Shopping Village – which is just off junction seven of the M20.

Commercial property developer Land Securities wants to bring forward plans to regenerate the site and turn it into a new shopping park focused on food, fashion and gardening.

At the heart of the complex would be a Waitrose supermarket – which would create 180 jobs. There are also advanced discussions with a leading department store about taking a unit within the new scheme.

Notcutts, the existing tenant, would remain on the site and be relocated to a new garden centre within the development.

Chris Ward of Land Securities said: "We are delighted to have already secured such a quality tenant as Waitrose.

"We are confident our proposals represent a fantastic opportunity to enhance the shopping experience that Maidstone can offer both residents and visitors as well as making a significant investment and major job creation in the area."

Newnham Court Shopping Village was originally opened in 1983. In additional to Notcutts there is currently a host of small shops as well as a pub and restaurant on the site.

Before a planning application is submitted, Land Securities is inviting residents, businesses and community groups to see the plans.

The two-day public consultation takes place at Newnham Court on Friday, September 6, from 10am to 6pm, and Saturday, September 7, from 10am and 3pm.

POLICE

Fighters arrested over battle with Samurai sword and garden fork

TWO men were arrested earlier this month after a fight where one was armed with a Samurai sword and the other a garden fork.

The incident took place in Athelstan Road, Margate, at around 4pm on Friday, August 16.

Now police investigating the disturbance are appealing for witnesses to come forward.

They believe around 50 people were in the street at the time of the incident and officers would like to speak to anyone who witnessed it.

Two men from Margate, aged 39 and 31, were arrested on suspicion of affray and have been bailed until September 16 while officers make further enquiries.

If you have any information call PC Carl McGee on 01843 222271.

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CUSTOMS

Two in court over smuggling

BORDER Force officers have uncovered heroin with a street value of around £1.5 million at the Channel Tunnel.

The 30kg of drugs was discovered last Sunday when officers stopped a Dutch-registered car at the entrance of the terminal in Coquelles, ready to board a train to Folkestone.

The drugs were concealed behind the dashboard.

Debora Daatzelaar and Paul van Rijn, both 49 and from the Netherlands, appeared at Canterbury Magistrates Court on Tuesday charged with the attempted importation.

They were remanded in custody and will appear at Canterbury Crown Court on September 16.

Paul Morgan, director of Border Force South East and Europe said: "Border Force is at the forefront of the fight to stop drugs entering the UK.

"We are determined to protect society from this activity which can have such a destructive impact.

"Anyone with information about activity they suspect may be linked to smuggling should call 0800 59 5000."

CRIME

Former county council office found to be site of £4m cannabis factory

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

A MULTI-million pound cannabis factory has been uncovered in former council offices in Dartford – believed to be one of the biggest hauls ever made in the county.

Up to 6,000 plants were discovered, with police putting intial estimates as to the size of the operation at as much as £4 million.

It is believed the plants were being grown across two floors of the abandoned St Lawrence building in West Hill. It was formerly owned by Kent County Council which housed its social services team there, but has remained vacant for a number of years.

Police are understood to have acted on a tip-off after someone was seen clambering in through a second floor window.

No arrests had been made at the time of going to press as investigations and dismantling of the operation continue.

Kent Police Chief Constable Ian Learmonth said: "This is a major drugs supply operation and while we don't yet know whether these drugs were to be used on Kent streets or further afield, stripping down an operation of this size will undoubtedly make a big impact on the county's drug network."

HUGE OPERATION: There were so many plants in the office block it took three days for police to clear the site after it was found

DS Rob Haines added: "The sheer size and scale of this operation means people must have been coming and going, and we are appealing to members of the public to search their minds and think of anything suspicious they may have seen around this building."

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POLITICS

After Ukip's remarkable gains during the county council elections in May, could its charismatic leader now be set to run for Westminster?

By Marijke Cox
marijke.cox@archant.co.uk

HIS party stormed to surprising success in the county council elections, sparking speculation leader Nigel Farage would not stop there in attempting to put Ukip on Kent's political map.

Now he's dropped a heavy hint he may stand in the county at the next General Election.

Gaining 17 seats on Kent County Council – and in doing so becoming the main opposition to the ruling Conservatives – certainly saw the party rise in the credibility ranks, but cynics will argue it takes more than mid-term success at a local level to gain outright national recognition.

So to see Ukip build on its support in this true blue county, it might just take one man – none other than Mr Farage himself – to continue the momentum.

A Kent resident, living in Westerham and a south east MEP, it wouldn't be so surprising for him to stand in the 2015 General Election for one of the county's 17 seats.

Perhaps more likely than in Lincolnshire, which has also been a rumoured target for him after the party did well in the local elections in the eastern county in May.

Speaking to KoS this week, Mr Farage refused to rule out standing for a Kent seat, but would not be drawn into the details.

"It's a possibility, I've said absolutely no more than that," he said. "Kent is an area which made extraordinary progress in the county council elections and we do feel Ukip could do well in parts of the county in 2015."

But which areas, Mr Farage refused to say.

"Ask me again in a year's time," he told us.

The 49-year-old said he was currently focused on the upcoming European elections in 2014, but stressed that he thought the party could do well in Kent in 2015.

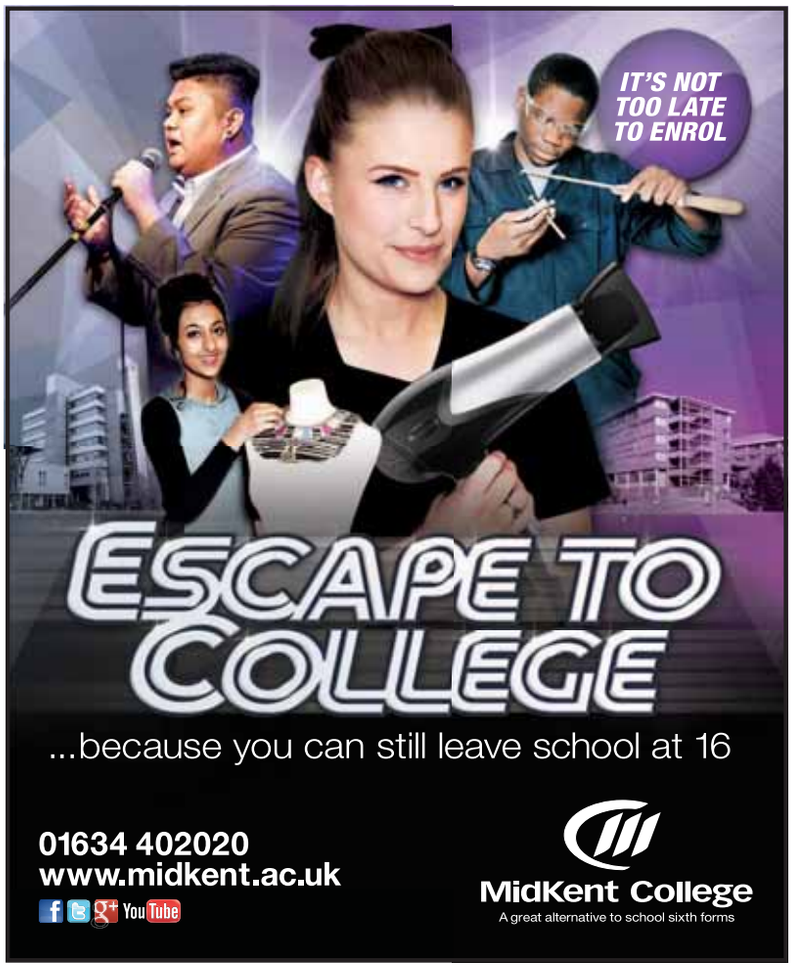
After the unexpected success of Ukip in the KCC elections, Mr Farage said the result signalled a "sea of change in British politics".

For the three main political parties – Conservative, Labour and the Liberal Democrats – it signalled a very real threat.

Mr Farage said at the time: "The people who vote for us are rejecting the establishment and quite right too.

"I don't think these votes are going away quickly."

CHARACTER: Ukip leader Nigel Farage



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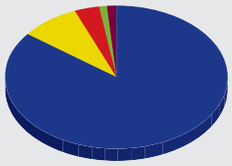
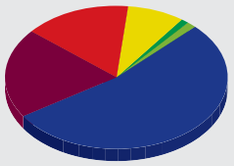


KCC prior to May 2 election

- Conservatives.....71 seats
- Liberal Democrats.....7 seats
- Labour.....3 seats
- Swanscombe Residents.....1 seat
- Ukip.....1 seat



KCC after the May 2 election

- Conservatives.....45 seats
- Ukip.....17 seats
- Labour.....13 seats
- Liberal Democrats.....7 seats
- Swanscombe Residents.....1 seat
- Green Party.....1 seat

WHERE WOULD HE STAND?

Nigel Farage has come to represent his party like perhaps no other single political leader of his generation.

So could he become the first Ukip MP? And in his homeland of Kent too?

Right now, only the bravest political pundit would bet against him making history.

He has managed to ride a popular wave as a charismatic frontman that even political opponents have developed a grudging respect for.

Like Boris Johnson, he has become the brand rather than the party he represents.

And Kent could prove ripe for the picking come 2015.

While, traditionally, mid-term elections are a notoriously unreliable indicator of the state of the main parties – it has become the norm for the ruling party, or parties in the case of the Coalition, to suffer from protest votes – Ukip appears to be rising and has established strongholds in two key areas of Kent.

In both Shepway and Thanet the party made major in-roads and secured councillors.

Therefore, the smart money would be on Mr Farage – were he to consider standing – pitting himself against one of the incumbent Tory MPs in those areas.

Which would mean going head-to-head against Sir Roger Gale or Laura Sandys in Thanet – with Ms Sandys almost certainly seen as the more likely to fall were he to challenge her – or Damian Collins in Folkestone; possibly a tougher nut to crack.

Either way, Mr Farage's entry into the race for Westminster would certainly trigger massive national interest.

COMMUNICATION

Lightning strike leaves homes without phone lines for over a month

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A FUMING businessman says he and his neighbours have been left "completely isolated" after a lightning strike cut off their phone and internet connections more than a month ago.

But it is hoped the situation could be resolved this week.

Some 14 homes in the hamlet of Queensway, near Dymchurch were cut off when lightning stuck in July.

John Engelbretson, chairman of the residents' association, said: "I run my heating company from home. I can't make contact with anyone in the outside world. We have no broadband, no telephones; we are completely isolated."

He woke to find his telephone cable laying across his garden following the storm.

However, British Telecom assures all 14 homes affected they are working to repair the damage caused by the storm.

It said 250 metres of cable needs to be replaced and that is taking some time because it is a complex problem.

One of Mr Engelbretson's neighbours, Vicki Clowis, added: "They keep promising us the work will be done. They told us a couple of weeks, then a few days, now the latest estimate is September 3, but I am not holding my breath."

BT said: "We were first made aware of a disruption to service on July 23. This was due to lightning damaging cable during severe weather conditions, in the Queensway area.

"Our engineers attended the scene on the same day the fault was reported.

"Unfortunately, due to the damage caused by the lightning, our engineers need to replace up to 250 metres of cable.

"This is a significant and complex engineering task, however, we hope to have restored services by early September. Our engineers are working as quickly as possible to help restore services, and we apologise for the inconvenience caused to those people who have been affected by this damage."

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THE Tesco Metro store on the High Street in West Malling has recently undergone a major refurbishment and to celebrate, the store has teamed up with this newspaper to give five lucky readers the chance to win £100 in Tesco gift cards!

Enter this great competition for your chance to treat yourself from a range of fresh, chilled and frozen products, household items, daily essentials, newspapers and magazines.

The store will benefit from a complete new look and will introduce hundreds of new lines and departments, including new fresh fish and meat counters, hot chicken and hot pie counters, a new salad bar plus a Grab and Go cheese deli.

To celebrate the makeover the store will hold a re-launch ceremony at 10am on Monday, September 2, when the team will present a local charity with a £500 donation.

Customers will also have the opportunity to enjoy a complimentary Champagne reception with the team.

So what are you waiting for?

For your chance to win one of five fantastic £100 Tesco gift cards simply answer the following question:

Which Tesco Metro store has just undergone a major refurbishment?

a. Tankerton
b. West Malling
c. Tunbridge Wells

To enter text KOS followed by TESCO and your answer then your first name, surname address and postcode to 80058, e.g. KOS TESCO C JOHN SMITH 2 THE STREET, TOWN, DV2 2GT. Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate. Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final.

Usual terms and conditions apply. See www.kentnews.co.uk for full details.

Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of September 10, 2013, your entry will not be valid, but you may still be charged. SMS services are provided by BBA Digital. Helpline: 0844 3572403. Alternatively enter by post to TESCO Competition, Archant KOS Media, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Kent TN25 6SS.

Employees of Tesco Ltd or Archant KOS Media cannot take part.

CRIME

Teens return safe from school holiday robbery

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A GROUP of school children are back home after a traumatic school trip to Africa saw them held up in a terrifying highway armed robbery.

The 14 teenagers, aged between 15 and 18, were on a culture field trip to Tanzania when the drama happened in the Tabora region.

About £350 in cash, plus mobile phones and cameras were taken by a gang believed to be seven-strong. Four men have since been captured, charged and have admitted their involvement.

Party leader Angela Daly said they heard rapid gunfire from outside before two men with balaclavas climbed on board.

Mrs Daly said it was "traumatic" but that the students remained "calm and composed".

The group was forced from their vehicle into the baking sun by the gang and some were threatened. None were hurt, however, although some were understandably shaken.

Headmaster John Weeds said the regional police commissioner assigned an escort to the group for the rest of the trip to ensure their safety.

The school has been sending groups of students to Africa for 30 years, and has no intention of stopping because of this one isolated incident. He said the trips broaden students' understanding of developing nations.

CRANBROOK SCHOOL: The pupils were unhurt

The British High Commission in Dar es Salaam was informed about the incident.

The head teacher added: "The vehicle was not targeted, and there were a number of other local people in the same queue of traffic involved. It wasn't just about the students.

"The students were fine. There is no accounting for the emotional effect of such an episode as that is difficult to diagnose, but they came back in high spirits."

The Foreign Office says Tanzania is generally trouble-free, but violent and armed crime is increasing and there is an underlying terrorism threat for the 75,000 Brits who visit annually. It urged visitors to use common sense and follow safety and security advice.

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KENT **REMEMBERED**

From a working life of paper pushing, railway enjoys its leisure time

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ON THE RIGHT TRACK: The light railway is now open to visitors

THE Sittingbourne and Kemsley Light Railway has, it is fair to say, had more ups and downs than most popular attractions over recent years.

What's more, its complex past has seen it almost hit the buffers on a number of occasions.

But a long battle by a band of dedicated volunteers means visitors can once again enjoy skimming the rooftops of the town over its 1.7 mile length.

The railway is the preserved southern half of the former Bowater's Railway, built to move materials for paper-making and also the finished products around the mill at Sittingbourne.

The line was built in 1867 by newspaper owner Edward Lloyd to supply Sittingbourne Mill with paper. Horses were used back then, with the first steam traction arriving in 1905 in the form of two Kerr Stuart Brazil class locomotives called Premier and Leader.

The fleet grew to 14 steam locomotives including two fireless engines, plus one diesel and one battery electric engine.

It was soon apparent a major update was required as business in the area grew. The process was slowed when World War One began, but was eventually completed by the time hostilities ceased.

The works included a half-mile long viaduct which, although originally designed as a steel construction, was finally built in reinforced concrete. Upkeep was some £100,000 over the past 10 years.

The next big update to the line happened in 1923, when a new mill was needed at Kemsley. The line then ran day and night, taking paper and employees back and forth.

The 'main line' was almost four miles long and incorporated more than 10 miles of track. There was also an internal standard gauge line that branched off the Sheerness line.

The company changed hands a number of times, passing from the Lloyd family in 1927 to the Berry family, and was finally purchased by the Bowater family in 1936. The Bowater Corporation was still in charge of the mills in 1965 when a study of internal transport was made which concluded that this would be better done by road transport.

So in 1969 the railway was handed over to the Locomotive Club of Great Britain's Light Railway Section, becoming the Sittingbourne and Kemsley Light Railway.

The Bowaters sold the mills in 1986 and these have since changed hands on several occasions. In 2007 paper production ceased at Sittingbourne Mill and the railway was forced to cease operating. Following lengthy negotiations, the then owners, M-Real, agreed a 125-year lease of about a mile of the track bed to the SKLR.

However, this stopped short of the Milton Regis Halt near the Asda supermarket and so it was impossible to operate a public train service.

In 2010, M-Real sold the mill, the rest of the trackbed and the site of Sittingbourne Viaduct Station to Essential Land, who subsequently demolished the mill. In December 2010, consultation took place with regards to their plans for the mill site.

The railway features prominently in these plans and as an interim measure it was able to operate services from Milton Regis Halt to Kemsley Down.

Regular services recommenced in May 2011.

Today it remains a popular attraction and is looking to secure its long-term future.

Visit www.sklr.net or call 01795 424899 for details.

OPINION

Just remember to breathe

Medway GP Dr **Farnaaz Sharief** looks at one method to help us to combat the mounting levels of stress we all face in our daily lives

HAPPINESS is good for you – everybody knows this, but where is this happiness?

We've done well with advances in technology and increased material wealth, but have we truly got a 'happier' society?

Regular surveys since 1950 of Britons and Americans have all shown that we are no happier now than we were then.

Similarly, surveys of British teenagers, since the 1970s, reveal that twice as many are emotionally disturbed now.

One in four British adults experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any one year and experts predict that in just 10 years, depression will be the highest ranking cause of disease in the developed world.

This alone currently costs the nation £8.6 billion a year – and with long waiting times for counsellors, lengthy patient lists for cognitive behavioural therapy and only 10 minute consultations with our GPs, how close are we to really solving this problem?

Stress is something we are all familiar with. The current social and economic situation has seen rising levels of it.

I encounter it daily in my professional life as a doctor and in my personal life.

My "to do" list is endless and dealing with everything on it can sometimes be draining.

The impact of a constant heavy workload can eventually wear us out and 'stress' our physical, mental and emotional states of health.

This can often be detrimental and if not addressed can lead to a variety of conditions such as depression and hypertension.

It's impossible, in this day and age, to shirk responsibilities – but it is possible to increase energy levels so we can deal with them better.

People often don't realise our breath is our most important source of energy and learning to work with it using simple techniques allows for more oxygen – and hence more energy to be delivered to our bodies.

I understood this simple, yet powerful principle, early on in my career and found it allowed me to deal effectively with the pressures of daily living and maintain peace of mind in challenging situations.

It was for this reason that I set up a series of free workshops. I try and pass on the practical, simple, yet powerful breathing techniques that allow for a release of stress and a resurgence of a calm, focused, positive state of mind.

These techniques have been used for centuries and integrating them into our lives can help manage stress better and prevent a worsening of symptoms.

We can increase energy levels so we can deal with problems better

Local data collected among those who regularly practice these techniques has shown a reduction in levels of depression and anxiety by up to 33 per cent.

Understanding the way our bodies work, managing our minds better and using breath to balance our lives all play an integral role in dealing with stress and ultimately improving our physical, mental and emotional states of being.

Find out more about this at www.manageyourmind.org.uk, call 0755 3959013 or email us on kent@iahv.org.uk.

You're also welcome to attend one of our free workshops, called Manage Your Mind, Manage Your Life that run every Tuesday at the Rainham School for Girls at 6.30pm. They are organised through the charity the International Association for Human Values (IAHV)

KOS COMMENT

Can we ever solve the problems of alcohol?

IF YOU ever read of a case of violence involving drug use, the debate more often than not focuses on the illegal substance.

When alcohol is the motivating factor, it tends to be dismissed as exuberant behaviour.

The question is, just how can we ever control the use of such a potentially destructive influence on our minds and bodies, when it is so readily available, when it is advertised everywhere we look, and there is such a fine line between being boisterous and violent when under the influence?

With a long hot summer encouraging us all to drink a little more, perhaps now is the time to reconsider our relationship with alcohol.

We need a bigger boat...

JAWS didn't do much for shark-human relations.

And it certainly shouldn't put us off exploring the remarkable marine life around our coastline.

We knew Kent's green and pleasant land was remarkable – now we must add its wonderful waters too.

Cricket in Alkham village by Jane Stupple

Images of Kent

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Renewables not fracking

I wrote to Julian Brazier MP on July 23 to register my concern at the Government's embracing of fracking for shale gas.

Normally, the individual attention that Mr Brazier gives in his replies is impressive, but the reply he sent me this time was below his usual standard, ignored the main points I raised and gave 'conventional' answers to the lesser points.

The big issue relates to by far the major problem with shale gas; there's too much of it. There is no way we can use more than a small proportion of the available gas without condemning our descendants to a hellish future.

As I wrote to him: "Current opinion is that the much vaunted target of two deg rise in global temperature is too dangerous, and should be revised down to 1.5 deg. It is the size of the unconventional fossil fuel reserves that is the problem. If current projections of the use of shale gas alone come to pass we would be faced with a rise or 3.5 deg."

The other problem is that "shale gas production causes seepage of methane, itself a global warming gas, 72 times as potent as carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.

A third problem is that it is a diversion from what we could and should be doing. We should reject fracking, as France and Germany have.

We could do worse than adopting Germany's approach to power supplies. They produce 6.5 times as much solar power as the whole of the USA. Deutsche Bank says the global solar market is about to enter a "third growth phase" where it can be deployed without subsidies and resist a backlash from utilities.

When I had my solar installation, some of the supplies came from Germany and maybe this is partly why renewables are so competitive there. We should be building up our renewable energy technology instead of faffing about with fracking.

Wind power is attractive, yet at present we produce a quarter of what Germany does. The report by the European Environment Agency, called Europe's onshore and offshore wind energy potential, confirms wind energy could power Europe many times over. The report highlights wind's potential in 2020 as three times greater than Europe's expected electricity demand, rising to a factor of seven by 2030.

Denmark's wind energy industry employs 20,000 and provides 38 per cent of the world turbine market. Why isn't Britain doing this?

Dr John Kemp, Whitstable

Bikers should follow USA

I have just returned from holiday in Florida and how relaxing it is driving there.

No-one flashing lights, blasting horns or making abusive gestures. They give way alternately at junctions, no "he's going through so I will push through too" attitude, and how refreshing it was to see proper motorcyclists. They follow the same traffic rules as any other road user, they don't race or over/undertake at traffic lights/roadworks.

I think our motorcycle school examiners should go over there for training so they can impart good driving etiquette to our motorcyclists.

Stewart May, Deal

Don't expand at Gatwick

Once again, last week, the M25 came to a stand still for hours, but still Gatwick airport owners plan to bring thousands of vehicles to this most congested business avenue of the south. How many people and businesses have lost revenue due to being stuck on the M25 for hours?

It took my husband, and colleagues who live in Surrey, over two-and-a-half hours to do what should be a 40-minute journey.

He, like so many others who regularly use the M25, know not to venture near when accidents are reported. Instead vehicles use the minor roads, bringing congestion outside homes and schools.

How can those in power allow an expansion to be considered? It's madness to bring more traffic to this congested corner of the M25. Gatwick, by its own figures, needs tens of thousands of people to work there and expects many more travellers.

There is no infrastructure planned to get all these people to the airport and no funding offered by owners' London Communications Agency, an overseas investment group.

West Sussex County Council has in principle agreed to support expansion without considering other counties' issues.

Those who will be paid by the Gatwick bulldozer can celebrate and move away, whereas we will remain and suffer the fallout of pollution, congestion and the disappearance of green land. **Sally Pavey, Warnham, West Sussex**

Make a stand against Russia

[Open letter to Thanet MPs Sir Roger Gale and Laura Sandys]

I ask you both to condemn in the strongest possible terms the recent law in Russia banning the "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships", which amounts to an assault on the basic rights and freedoms of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) citizens in Russia and on freedom of expression more generally.

The arrival of draconian homophobic censorship laws has been coupled with an increase in homophobic attacks and killings, and with the 2014 Winter Olympics due to take place in the Russian city of Sochi in February, I am deeply concerned about the safety of our district's LGBT constituents, who may wish to attend this event.

Please support calls for the UK to boycott the games unless the host country meets its human rights obligations. Such a move would send a message that we stand for equality and fairness, as well as help build the pressure on Putin to put an end to his LGBT crackdown.

Please use your influence to urge the International Olympic Committee to take a stand against homophobia in Russia. **Cllr John Worrow, lead for equality and inclusion, Thanet District Council**

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include your daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

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HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383**

AMANDA 44 blonde, blue eyed, very leggy, fun to be with, honest and caring seeking kind, considerate honest gent 74-79 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405315**

NATASHA is a naughty 22yr old lady seeking no strings discreet fun with older man. **Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box 366033**

SUE 65, slim, animal lover, 5ft, blonde, likes socialising, meals out, theatre, countryside, happy go lucky, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405767**

CAROLINE 60, 5ft 2ins, likes animals, walks, travel, gardening, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402067**

59YR old Kent lady, bubbly, large build, dog lover, easy-going, GSOH, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403071**

JAYNE 44 bored, underappreciated pretty blue eyed intelligent lady seeking fun and interesting professional in similar situation to me for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403011**

NICKY 45, 5ft 2ins, blue eyes, blonde hair, looking for genuine male for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 389774**

SUSIE, seeks fifty shades of grey with guy any age but must be discreet, call and I will explain why.**Tel: No. 0905 002 1957 Box 407321**

LISA blonde, blue eyes, looking for male, 42-54 for fun and romance. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404877**

LIZ blonde blue eyed curvy female, considered attractive, tactile, sensual, enjoys music, entertaining, nice people, seeking well educated professional 50-60yrs. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402773**

JO 29 tall slim female who loves soaps, animals, shopping, being a mum and am looking for 40's male with GSOH who will appreciate a tactile, loving female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402765**

52YR old female, single mum of 2, seeking honest, caring, decent man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 389891**

SLIM N/S female, 54, working, reliable, easy going, likes nature, animals, seeks nice male companion, 50-64 for country/seaside walks and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405745**

SLIM tall, elegant, feminine, N/S, solvent lady, young 50's, likes travel, red wine, seeks tall, sincere, Military/professional gent of high calibre. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405707**

LISA 44, blonde hair, blue eyes, 5ft 6ins, nice personality, trustworthy, kind, likes cinema, nights in, walks, music, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404751**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

JACQUELINE 79 widow, easy going, good listener, not slim or neurotic, OHAC, Sevenoaks, lonely would like gentleman's company. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405533**

ATTRACTIVE female, 53, N/S, 5ft 8ins, looking for similar male, 50-55 who loves countryside, animals and is easygoing. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405421**

CLAIRE looking for adventurous male to live life to the max and enjoy adult fun times with. Go on give me a call. Any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402993**

GILL 41, shy, lonely single country loving female with no ties, OHAC WLTM n/s genuine, confident male companion for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402799**

AMANDA 36yr old single female, blue eyes, curvy, really pretty with lovely smile, loves music, nights out, WLTM loving male for dates and hopeful ltr. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402787**

5FT female, brown hair, 39, single mum, seeks caring, dedicated guy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 397915**

MALE 48, 5ft 10ins, medium build, likes gardening, cinema, reading, WLTM lady. Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404295**

21YR old slim figured female, no ties, looking for male 30-45yrs for non committed relationship, discretion assured. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402761**

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LYN happy, young looking 72yr old, seeking interesting man, 65 plus to enjoy life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403101**

GEORGINA widow, WLTM gent, 60-80 with GSOH for days out, friendship, companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 393067**

SHIRLEY 32 attractive nurse, enjoys good food/wine, keeping fit, looking good, searching for non committed relations with mature well-dressed man. Any age/looks/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402779**

FEMALE seeks Prince Charming, 20-30 to sweep her off her feet. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392891**

ANNA very lonely divorced single mum with lots of love to give seeks similar caring male who also wants to find the right person, any age/looks. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403481**

LISA 39yr old tall slim blonde with GSOH and a wicked sense of humour, employed, OHAC, looking for similar male who enjoys life as much as I do. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403391**

DOG lover short of British slim petite lady to maybe get into 1-2-1 relationship and start something new. Smoker welcome, age immaterial. Tunbridge Wells area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404417**

COUNTRY loving outgoing female, blue eyes, 5ft 2ins, genuine, caring, intelligent, seeks honourable, smart, professional male, 68-75 to share laughter and companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392899**

SINGLE mum, new to Canterbury, 37, attractive, blonde, seeking soul mate, preferably with car. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 397751**

60YR old black female, sociable, seeks romantic, articulate white male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402523**

REBECCA kind, caring, honest, lonely, seeking older gent to wine and dine me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402273**

DIVORCED female, 66, blue eyes, 5ft 4ins, medium build, blonde hair, seeks male, 65-75 for friendship/companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403275**

CHRIS petite attractive brunette, enjoys social drinks, meals out, theatre, seeks hardworking professional male looking for adult attention too. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402759**

47YR old female, fun loving, green eyes, likes most things, seeks N/S male, 47-52 with GSOH for nights out, friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401287**

SANDRA outgoing 53, carer, seeks male for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390230**

DELILAH 49, likes animals, blonde, blue eyes, seeking older gent, late 70's who is kind and willing to care about me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403769**

SUSIE young 55, slim, 5ft 3ins, seeks tall, honest guy from Medway towns. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 389027**

LISA 5ft 2ins, 43, average build plus a few pounds, blonde hair, blue eyes, looking for man for dates. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401421**

LINDA young 62, smoker, seeking gent, 55-65 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 400521**

JAN 54, petite, seeks male, 48-58 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 394382**

JACQUELINE 82, widow, car driver, not slim, ugly or neurotic, seeks interesting, caring gent, 70 plus for talk and company. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403659**

BEV very attractive lady who loves cosy nights in, seeks caring man who can put the spring back in my step and twinkle back in my eye, call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403353**

Men Seeking

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ANTHONY 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355**

RETIRED male, 66, 6ft 2ins, easy going, GSOH, loyal, loves pets, meals out, life, seeks lady for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407317**

71YR old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277**

TALL friendly, very light hearted, single 58, seeks pretty woman for LTR, mutual selection of activities and choosing how to spend our time. Croydon. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407147**

TALL slim male, early 40's, seeks loving female, 29-39 to share the nice things in life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407065**

CANTERBURY white mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, seeks slim-medium build black/white/Asian/oriental female, 20-40 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

YOUNG mixed race male, seeking female for no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402499**

MIRANDA early 60's, sociable, friendly, seeking similar N/S solvent, presentable, easygoing male with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 394843**

MICHELLE petite fun female, outgoing, enjoys holiday abroad, OHAC and pretty self-sufficient, looking for someone to share a LTR with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399515**

SENSUAL female looking to enjoy life a little more, seeking likeminded male to enjoy interesting conversations over dinner, hopefully furthering our experience. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399195**

BLACK beautiful female, 5ft 7ins, likes most things in life, seeks special male for companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 398391**

SINGLE mum, 35, white British, 5ft 2ins, varied interests, looking for male to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 400329**

48YR old female, kind, loving, caring, genuine, fun loving, loves music, singing, theatre, holidays, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387797**

FEMALE looking for male for friendship and romance. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392365**

DEBBIE 50, seeking man, 60 plus with GSOH for fun nights out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 398173**

TALL friendly, light hearted, single, 58, seeks pretty woman for LTR with mutual selection of activities and choosing how to spend our time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405557**

70YRS young male, good looking, GSOH, seeking lady for love and affection. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403455**

RONALD 65 plus, 5ft 9ins, slim, sociable, GSOH, tactile, N/S, many interests, seeking lady dance partner to learn ballroom and Latin. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403211**

STEVE 64, active, likes fishing, swimming, karaoke, honest, genuine, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405717**

CANTERBURY sign language interpreter 58, 5ft 10ins, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, seeks slim-medium build female, 21-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

BLACK male, looking for 1-2-1 relationship with laid back, understanding female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406221**

MEDWAY male, 60's, solvent, seeks attractive lady, 55-65, GSOH to wine, dine and share the good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405429**

DISCREET kind man, 48, gentle, loving, genuine, seeking lady, Whitstable. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406439**

RICHARD divorced, 61, N/S, likes classic cars, looking to meet nice lady for meals out, days out, friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406349**

BRIAN 6ft 3ins, medium build, blue eyes, brown hair, fun loving, happy go lucky, honest, seeks special lady for fun and to enjoy life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406333**

MIKE 39, 6ft 7ins, large build, blue eyes, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406321**

DEREK Croydon area, 52, self employed, seeks female for 1-2-1 relationship, likes meals out, places of interest, holidays. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406559**

OUTGOING professional, fun loving, entertaining male, seeking warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405633**

RETIRED male 68, 5ft 8ins, considerate, GSOH, easy-going, likes driving, shopping, most music, seeking lady 60-70 for friendship. Ashford. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404589**

YOUNG 70 widower, fit, lonely, 5ft 11ins, 11st, likes drives, walks, DIY, meals out, gardening, smoker, looking for lady to spend life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405519**

35YR old male, 6ft, dark hair, easy going, likes music, films, reading, walks, looking for female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405941**

ACTIVE 60's semi-retired man, OHAC, GSOH, enjoys theatre, dancing, singing, amateur dramatics, coast, gardening etc., WLTM n/s female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404671**

FIT fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405857**

DAVE 45, 6ft, large build, ginger hair, green eyes, caring, OHAC, likes laugh, cinema, pubs, restaurants, walks, shopping, music, dvds, gardening, animals, seeks female of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405451**

RETIRED male 68, 5ft 8ins, considerate, GSOH, easy-going, likes driving, shopping, most music, seeking lady 60-70 for friendship. Ashford. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404589**

VIC mid 60's medium build male, active, N/S, likes countryside, DIY, seeks compatible female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405085**

CHRIS from Folkestone, 68yrs young widower, N/S, 5ft 9ins, OHAC, likes country music, rock n roll, WLTM N/S female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405079**

CHRIS 68, 5ft 9ins, 13st, frustrated widower, likes country/western music, real ale, gardening, cruises, looking for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402271**

BRUCE likes meals out, romantic walks, days out, seeking lady, 40-60 for friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403097**

40 something Gemini 5ft 10ins, slim, GSOH, varied outdoor interests, seeks similar outgoing female, 30-45 for dates and LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404535**

TED 63, 5ft 7ins, average build, seeks female 55-75 for friendship, possible LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401913**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, OHAC, independent, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Children/animals welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404537**

THANET male, young mid 60's, caring, 5ft 5ins, dark hair, likes travel, countryside, seeks slim, attractive local soul mate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403729**

MICHAEL slim, 44, likes CD, films, seeks older male 55 plus for fun times in the Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404373**

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for ltr. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013**

DENNIS 53yrs retired police officer living in Kent, WLTM female for mutual fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404201**

GARDENER 50, 6ft, honest, happy, single, fit gardener seeks attractive younger lady for fun NSA nights in, weekends away, country walks, picnics and good conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404115**

SALVATORE 68, N/S, widow, Italian, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402481**

KEVIN 49, single dad, employed, good cook/laugh, seeks female for fun and good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402405**

KEVIN 50 6ft average build, kind, caring, GSOH, black hair, hazel eyes, various interests, seeks female 35-55 for friendship/romance. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405087**

FUN fit, 60yr old male, seeks older, well built female for no strings discreet fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404971**

CHRIS 58, 5ft 9ins, 13st, frustrated widower, likes country/western music, real ale, gardening, cruises, looking for companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402271**

ANDY 36, sexy, fun, come say hello. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402903**

EDDIE African male, seeking female, 20-40 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 394354**

BLACK male, 50, bubbly personality, seeks buxom, pear shaped, rubinesque white female, 25-55 for friendship, possible LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402887**

GENUINE fun loving guy 55, medium build, blue eyes, seeks genuine lady, 45-57 for fun times, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401761**

5FT 7ins white male, 50, N/S, looking to settle down. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401897**

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RON 60, overweight, passive, seeking active guy for daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407437**

TV/BI CD, seeks feminine male with similar interests for discreet daytime meets. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406735**

PETER looking for male, 30-60 for casual fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406049**

THANET male, mid 60's, inexperienced, seeks male of similar age for occasional meetings and mutual interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405863**

BI guy, CD, 57, OHAC, seeking similar for mutual fun and friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404907**

EASY-GOING guy, medium build, likes outdoors, DIY, seeking slim, N/S guy for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403267**

BI male, senior, clean shaven, Maidstone area, seeks bi male, N/S for occasional meets, must be discreet, 45-55. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402393**

DAVID 66, retired, fit, looking for man, 50-75 for daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402249**

STEVEN 63, looking for LTR with man, 59 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402147**

BI guy 45, seeking similar bi guy for fun and friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402093**

Friendship

STRAIGHT male, 40, Medway, seeks sports buddies into table tennis, golf, snooker and pool. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405417**

MALE early 80's, fit, active, many interests, seeks similar male for friendship and company. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 401621**

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Prepare to be bowled over by Blowers

Cricket-commentating legend Henry Blofeld is back on the road and ready to share his Test Match memories

By **GREG MILES**

IF there is one thing that Henry Blofeld wants to stress about his upcoming Memories Of Test Match Special, it is that it has nothing to do with cricket.

You might think that a touch surprising given that the man affectionately known as Blowers has the sport running through his veins.

The 74-year-old will most definitely not be discussing the finer points of the game, either, as he bids to gather a mixed-gender audience.

"We don't talk about cricket, the intricacies of it, at all. It's a very lady-friendly show," he said.

'I've never done anything to prepare. You can't prepare for an ad-lib programme'

"People think, well, we'll let the old man go along."

One of international cricket's best-known broadcasters, Blofeld has become a familiar voice for fans at the forefront of the Test Match Special programme that has covered international matches since 1972.

It was nine years before then that he started out in journalism, though, reporting on England's first tour of India for The Guardian in 1963-64.

His is a job that has taken him all over the world and given him an enviable insight into the game and the many characters within it.

It is those stories with which he will hopefully be having the audiences in stitches, together with his best friend and Test Match Special producer Peter Baxter, when the pair visit Tunbridge Wells's Assembly Hall Theatre in October.

He said: "It is all about the memories of Test Match Special from inside the box from Peter Baxter, who's with me.

"It's his perspective from behind the scenes, and my perspective is from in front of the microphone.

"We talk about great characters and commentating overseas. We set out to produce a really amusing show about characters like John Arlott and Christopher Martin-Jenkins."

Picking up the microphone for the first time came naturally to the man who was given an OBE in 2003 for his services to broadcasting.

"It was quite nerve-racking when I first started in 1972. It's a question of whether you've got the ability to get through it, which I did," he said. "To start with, it was a bit more worrying than it is now. I've never done anything to prepare. You can't prepare for an ad-lib programme. It's got a good sense of humour."

Baxter produced the show from 1973 until 2007 alongside Blowers until he retired and was replaced by Adam Mountford.

While his involvement in the sport may not always have been that obvious, with Blowers at the forefront, Baxter has plenty of contributions to make to the show, including having once been locked out of the ground at Galle in Sri Lanka in 2001. He and BBC cricket correspondent Jonathan Agnew eventually watched the action from a nearby fort.

'I shan't retire ever, I shall die before I retire, unless I'm incapacitated'

Blofeld, whose father attended school with James Bond creator Ian Fleming and unwittingly saw his name used for one of the spy's greatest adversaries, had a cricket career of his own before taking to the microphone.

But his progression in the sport was limited by a serious accident when in his final year at Eton. He was hit by a bus while riding a bike and remained unconscious for 28 days.

He did, however, go on to play 16 first-class matches for Cambridge University between 1958 and 1959.

As a wicketkeeper, his first catch was Kent legend and future England captain Lord Colin Cowdrey.

He has no regrets at not prolonging his cricket career and instead feels commentating is much better than playing.

"There is no sense of disappointment whatever," he said.

"I had a wonderful time. The best thing is commentating – when you commentate, you don't have to retire at 36 or 37. You can go on until you're in your 70s."

And he has no plans to quit any time soon.

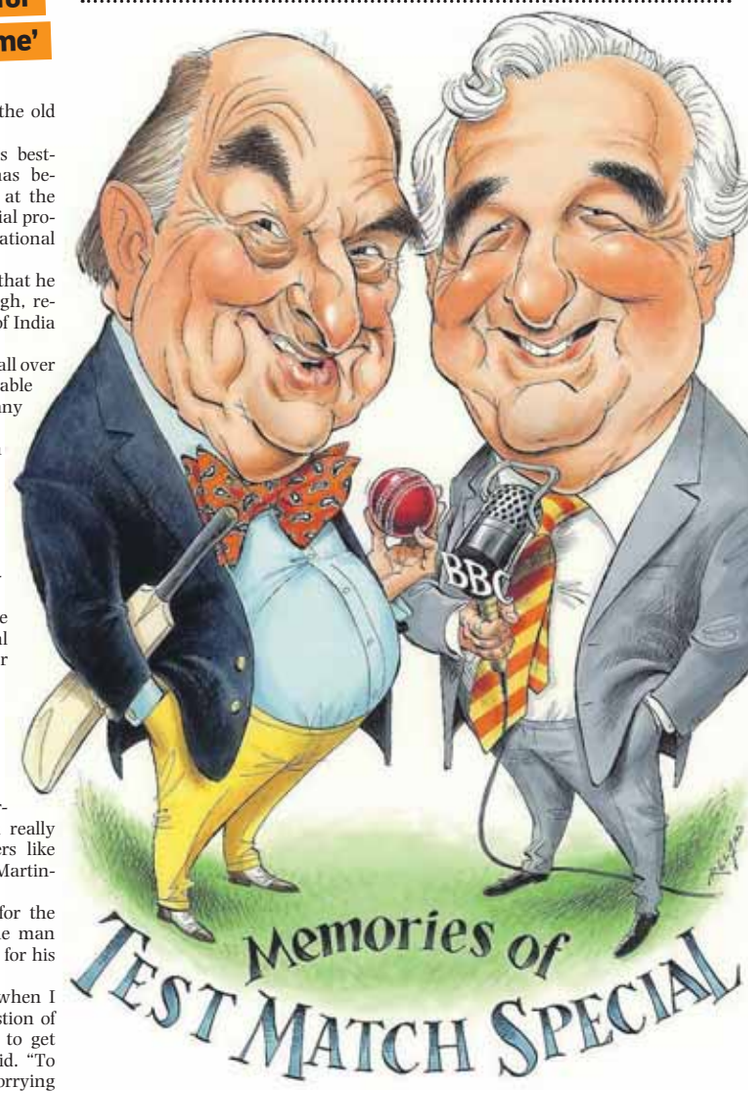
"I shan't retire ever. I shall die before I retire, unless I'm incapacitated or become senile," he said.

The show has been going several years and has been enjoyed by a variety of audiences.

Recently a shortened version was performed at the Edinburgh Festival, where it went well.

Memories Of Test Match Special is at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on Wednesday, October 9, at 8pm.

Tickets are priced at £17.50 and can be booked by visiting the website at www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or alternatively by phoning 01892 530613.



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@southmodelshow

Model-show visitors will have their eyes on the skies during weekend

By Mike Jervis
editorial@archant.co.uk

A FATHER-and-son flying team are set to give the crowds at this year's Southern Model Show a thrilling display that has been entertaining audiences around the world.

Steve and Matt Bishop, from Shropshire, are renowned throughout the model-flying world and will be flying their quarter-scale 22kg Red Arrow Hawks powered by Jetcat P200 at the event, which is being held in its new home of Headcorn aerodrome on Saturday and Sunday, September 14-15.

Not only will Steve and Matt be flying their model-aircraft versions of the Red Arrows, they will be coordinating this year's Southern Model Show flying displays. The pair came second in the World Formation Cup in Germany last year.

Steve, 51, said: "We're really looking forward to the Southern Model Show. It's such a well-supported event and attracts veteran model fanatics from far and wide, but it also introduces the hobby to a new audience who get hooked after the weekend.

"The displays at this year's show are really going to be spectacular. We have some fantastic aircraft on show and we'll be staging some sensational stunts and brave flying by our exhibitors. There really will be some jaw-dropping moments that will have the crowd fixed on the skies above Headcorn."

Earlier this year, Steve and his son Matt, 24, put a jet-turbine similar to that which might be found in a Boeing 747 aeroplane in a model car and painted it in the style of the games-console hero Mario.

The pair believe the cart has a top speed of somewhere around 180 miles per hour.

Steve said: "We've always built model jets, but it's been a dream of mine to put a jet engine in a vehicle. It looks so comical – it's a small car with only enough room for one person, but it's so noisy. It's also fast.

"We think it is the world's first. We initially did it for the children at a previous airshow, but now we've got bookings for it from all over the world."

WHAT'S ON

- A spectacular display of hot-air balloons and a night glow – the largest in the UK this year.
- To mark the 50th anniversary of Dr Who, his arch enemies the Daleks will be patrolling Headcorn aerodrome.
- Aeroplanes, including the Red Arrow Hawks syncro display and The Turbulent Display Team
- Helicopters
- Boats
- Cars, including Mario's Jet Car
- Tanks

Steve and Matt made the car to be one of the main attractions at the 2013 International Air Show at Weston Park in Staffordshire but have had calls from drag strips encouraging them to come and test the vehicle.

The pair achieved a dream at the weekend during the Wings & Wheels show at Dunsfold, where they flew their Red Arrow Hawks in front of the Red Arrows pilots. They also got to meet their heroes.

The duo will be joined by an exciting line-up of top flying teams, including The Turbulent Display Team, one of the longest-established flying display teams in the world. Since 1959, they have been entertaining audiences at hundreds of airshows and events home and abroad.

Show director Colin Hitchins said: "When the Southern Model Show returns, it really will be with a bang.

"It looks set to be one of the most thrilling shows in the South East and will have much more than previous shows – from aeroplanes and helicopters to boats, cars and tanks.

"There will be a full-size aero display on both days. The exciting Red Arrows model syncro pair, complete with smoke system, will also take to the skies. It really will be a weekend event for all the family."

The Southern Model Show is expected to attract some 12,000 visitors, making it one of the largest shows of its kind in the country.

■ **Doors to the show open at 10am on both Saturday and Sunday, September 14-15.**

Online discounted tickets are available priced at £10 per adult, £8 per child or £30 for a family ticket (2+2).

Two-day tickets are available from £14 for a child, £18 for an adult and £52 for a family.

Overnight camping is available at the Headcorn aerodrome site from £8 per night.

Tickets and camping can be booked at www.heritage-events.co.uk.

Pounds for pints at beer festival

ORGANISERS of the East Malling Beer and Cider Festival are raising funds for a local charity by pledging to donate a cash sum, equivalent to returned unused drinks tokens, to SERV Kent, whose volunteers deliver blood and blood products for free to the county's hospitals.

Similar initiatives have raised three-figure sums for worthy causes and members of the Maidstone and Mid-Kent branch of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) were keen that this year's event, on Saturday, September 7, in the grounds of East Malling Research, the horticultural research station, supported a charity with which visitors could identify.

Jeff Tucker, chairman of Maidstone and Mid-Kent CAMRA, said: "Our visitors have been generous in the past and I'm sure they will recognise the connection between their pint of beer and the charity."

Trevor Sayer, events organiser for SERV Kent, said: "We're grateful for CAMRA's offer to support our fund-raising efforts and hope that visitors have an enjoyable day at the festival."

Admission to the event, which runs from 11am to 8pm, costs £4 or £2 for card-carrying CAMRA members. As well as live music and entertainment for all the family, food and produce will be available.

A free festival shuttle bus service runs every 30 minutes from 10.26am (Aylesford train station) and 10.35am (West Malling station).

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How Gypie kept a Feelgood factor

REVIEW MUSIC

Dr Feelgood
Taking No Prisoners
(with Gypie 1977-1981)

THIS lavishly-produced box set could have been subtitled 'What happened to the Feelgoods after Wilko Johnson left', a fact acknowledged by the title name-check for the band's replacement guitarist John 'Gypie' Mayo.

In the early 70s, Dr Feelgood, based on the other side of the Thames estuary on Canvey Island, were a much-needed breath of musical fresh air with their stripped-back proto-punk R'n'B and incendiary live shows built on the charismatic axis of Johnson and singer Lee Brilleaux.

But after four LPs, Johnson was out and the relatively-unknown Mayo was chosen to replace the man many considered one of the finest guitarists of his generation. No pressure, then...

This four-CD and one-DVD set shows how Mayo rose to the challenge, giving the band a more straightforward rock edge and also their only Top 10 single, Milk And Alcohol.

The set includes the remastered four studio LPs Be Seeing You, Private Practice, Let It Roll and A Case Of The Shakes, plus the two live releases.

Bonus material includes rare and unreleased recordings, live performances and the single Waiting For Saturday Night – and b-side Eileen – which features Mayo's replacement, Johnny Guitar.

The DVD also includes goodies such as a BBC Sight And Sound In Concert performance, TOTP, promo videos, Alright Now and The South Bank Show, an interview with Private Practice producer Richard Gottehrer and a current-day interview with Mayo.

It's all wrapped up in a long-form, hard-cover package with a colour booklet, which includes sleeve-notes by Will Birch, a full discography and sections from tour programmes, as well as memorabilia and unseen photographs.

So what does it all add up to? It's almost unfair to compare Mayo and Johnson, given that the latter is dying and fast approaching national-treasure status, but the question of who was best hangs over this collection.

Mayo chose not to be a Johnson copyist, and it was no mean feat to slot into such a tight unit. The fact he was able to step into such big shoes and keep the unit going when they should have imploded is a measure of his contribution.

Dennis South

Marlowe hosts a classic in aid of mental-health campaign

By Dave Mairs
dave.mairs@archant.co.uk

BACK Of House Theatre Company is bringing Dale Wasserman's stage adaptation of One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest to Canterbury.

The production supports the Time to Change campaign. Managed by mental-health charities Mind and Rethink, it aims to raise awareness and tackle discrimination around mental illness.

Back Of House is supporting Time to Change because of personal connections to the charity, with several members suffering, or having suffered, mental-health problems. Collections will be held after each performance and Time to Change information will be displayed alongside local mental-health-service information.

A question-and-answer session will also be held after the Saturday performance with mental-health professionals and the show's director, Will Millar.

He said: "We are thrilled to be supporting the Time to Change campaign. Mental-health stigma is a very real thing, something I have experienced in the past with my own troubles."

The production has also been programmed to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day on Tuesday, September 10.

One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest plays at The Marlowe Studio at 8pm on Friday and Saturday, September 6-7, and is suitable for those aged 16 and over.

Tickets are priced at £10 (concessions £9); to book, phone 01227 787787 or visit www.marlowetheatre.com.

Cat's scarlet women and sultry jazz

THE talents of jazz-singer Sarah Moule are being brought to the Sarah Thorne Theatre Club by The Mosaic Cat, described as "England's first festival of mixed arts cabaret".

The show features songs by Fran Landesman and Simon Wallace, Jacques Prévert, Bob Dylan, Stephen Sondheim, Leiber and Stoller, Teddy Thompson and Ida Cox.

Moule presents a 21st-century look at her favourite desirable and dangerous ladies as the theatre is transformed into a cabaret club.

Moule will be joined by music maestro, pianist and composer Simon Wallace to play a sultry evening of sensual jazz and blues.

You can see Sarah Moule's Femmes Fatales – Songs for Scarlet Women at the Sarah Thorne Theatre Club, Memorial Theatre, St Peter's Road, Broadstairs, at 7.30pm on Saturday, September 14. Tickets cost £12, or £14 for non-members; phone 0845 2626263.

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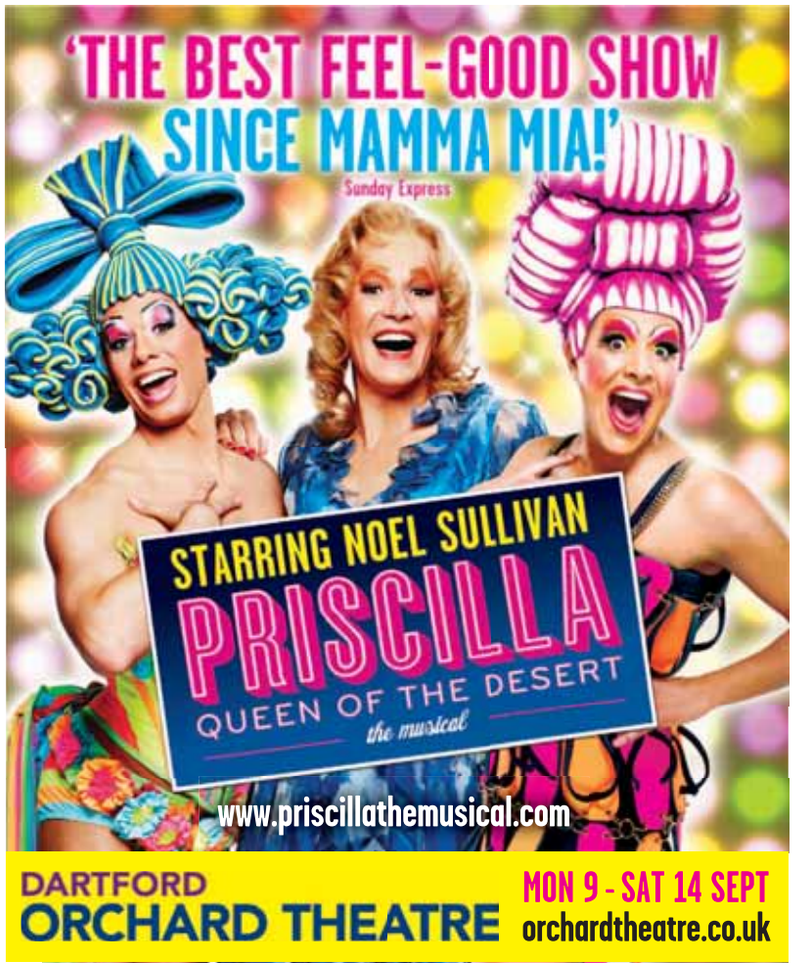

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Tradition can meet modern... and survive the experience

I DEFY anyone who's not immediately won over as they approach the stunning Abbot's Fireside, nestled in the attractive village of Elham, near Canterbury.

A 15th-century building virtually untouched by the modern hand, it is quintessentially English but with a grandeur that can't help but draw the eye as you drive past.

I'm not surprised when I learn that its guests have included King Charles II, while hiding from Oliver Cromwell's Roundheads, and the Duke of Wellington, who converted the hotel into his headquarters while preparing his battle with Napoleon at Waterloo.

Although quiet when my companion and I arrive, the atmosphere was inviting, with a friendly waitress showing us to our table and taking our drinks order.

The menu was surprising. I was, perhaps childishly, envisaging a pig's head on the table with huge drumsticks of chicken like a scene out of The Sword In The Stone. Instead, along with the traditional pub food, a special menu boasted surf'n'turf, sizzling chilli dishes and some Thai.

My surprise turned to concern. These days it is not unusual to stumble across restaurants in historic buildings that are trying to be modern but instead serving up a contemporary-meets-olde-worlde car-crash.

RESTAURANT **REVIEW**

However, in this case, the approach seems to work (there is no car-crash). The food isn't so 'out there' as to turn away customers looking for the traditional pub grub, but there is enough variety to spice things up a little.

To start, I selected the tempura prawns with hot, spicy dip and my guest the Thai fish balls, which came with sweet chilli sauce.

The prawns were crispy on the outside, juicy on the inside and given a lift by the almost blow-your-head-off heat of the dip, which for me was delicious. My guest's fish dish was equally as tasty and we were left, albeit with hot mouths, eagerly awaiting our next dishes.

I chose the chicken chilli sizzler and my companion opted for the surf'n'turf – a juicy piece of steak with tempura prawns. Both dishes came with chips.

Mine arrived on a sizzling platter and delivered everything it promised: bags of flavour with that chilli kick.

The dishes we chose were in complete contrast to our surroundings – wood beams, dried hops and country décor – but traditional pub dishes were also available. And so for dessert we went back to British: Granny Smith's apple-and-caramel pie, and waffles with strawberries and cream. The waffles were slightly hard, but the apple-and-caramel pie was delicious.

By the time we ordered coffee, the restaurant was bustling, with almost every table full, many with guests staying in rooms upstairs.

The atmosphere was spot on, the staff attentive and the food good, but it's the surroundings that really make this place special.

The bill came to £82.

Margaret Hall

■ **Abbot's Fireside**
High Street, Elham CT4 6TD
(telephone 01303 840566)

Ambrette toasts win with county's finest

MARGATE'S Ambrette Indian restaurant, named Best Restaurant at Produced in Kent's Taste of Kent awards earlier this year, is to serve a nine-course gourmet meal utilising ingredients from the awards' other winners this autumn.

The awards were presented at a gala dinner in March, but chef patron Dev Biswal is waiting until Sunday, November 24, to host the celebratory feast, when much of the winning produce has been harvested and there is an abundant supply of game.

The tasting menu, costing £49 a head, will feature fresh fish of the day from Sankey's, the Tunbridge Wells winner of Best Fishmonger.

Meat Retailer of the Year Godmersham Game will supply the woodpigeon and venison, while vegetables and cobnuts will be supplied by Local Retailer of the Year Quex Barn.

Winner of three awards on the night, Cheesemakers of Canterbury, will be represented by Ellie's soft goat's cheese.

Gadds' (Best Kent Beer) and wines from Biddenden Vineyards (Best Kentish Wine) will also be served on the night.

"Produced in Kent has done a fantastic job in raising the profile of the wide array of quality foods and drinks available locally and The Taste of Kent awards recognised the skills and efforts of artisans and producers," said Biswal.

"It's a privilege to be able to work with such quality ingredients and be able to showcase them at The Ambrette."

• Visit www.theambrette.co.uk to learn more about The Ambrette and the events it holds throughout the year.

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Kent's finest revealed

September brings English Heritage's popular Heritage Open Days... here are five of the best archaeological or historical sites in the organisation's care in the county

1 Kit's Coty House

There are more famous monuments than Kit's Coty House but few that occupy a more special place in heritage history. Three uprights and a massive capstone are all that remain of what was possibly once the entrance to a Megalithic chambered tomb.

Imposing as it looks, however, on its mound a mile or so north of Aylesford, its appearance and antiquity (it is probably between 4,000-5,000 years old) are not the reasons for its uniqueness.

In the late 19th century, when momentum was gathering for greater protection of ancient ruins, General Augustus Pitt-Rivers, a retired army officer regarded by many as the founder of the archeological profession, was appointed the first Inspector of Ancient Monuments.

He was answerable to the Office of Works – his post survives to this day – and Kit's Coty was the first monument he visited.

As a result, in 1883 it became the first site to be taken into Government guardianship, kick-starting what has become known as the National Collection.

This comprises something in the region of 800 publically-accessible sites, ranging from Stonehenge to nuclear bunkers.

Pitt-Rivers was worried that the Kit's Coty stones were being chipped away by vandals and so had erected the spiked iron railings that still surround the monument.

■ **Getting there: west of A229, two miles north of Maidstone, satnav: ME20 7DE**

2 Richborough Castle

Kent is blessed with many other significant monuments besides Kit's Coty. It can, for example, boast of having the first Roman site to be taken under the Ministry's wing; Richborough Castle was handed over by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1911.

A custodian was appointed to watch over the fort, atmospherically situated on the east Kent marshes, and given the right to graze his stock within the walls. His cottage, an arts and crafts construction, can still be seen. This is the earliest example of a custodian's house still standing.

Richborough, a couple of miles north-west of Sandwich, was the base from which the Romans defended their invasion in AD43. Its thick walls are among the best preserved in the UK. It was one of the last Roman-occupied sites here, with a community lingering on into the 5th century.

■ **Getting there: catch a boat from Sandwich and reach the fort as the Romans would have done, satnav: CT13 9JW**

YOUR WEEKEND

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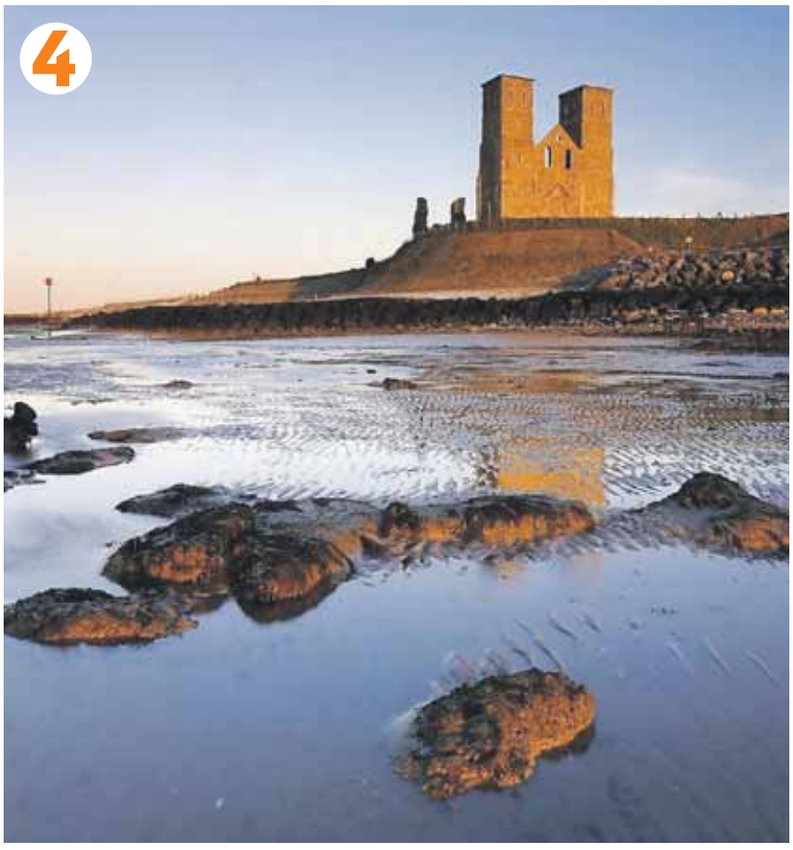

3 Lullingstone Roman Villa

Also from the Roman period is Lullingstone Villa, near Eynsford.

Its most prized feature is the mosaic floor, accidentally discovered by 18th-century farm labourers when they were sinking fence-posts.

Getting there: 0.5 mile south-west of Eynsford, off A225, off junction 3 of the M25, satnav: DA4 0JA

4 Reculver Abbey

Kent is often described as the cradle of English Christianity, following the landing of St Augustine's missionary party at Ebbsfleet in 597, and so it is fitting that the county has some evocative spots relating to those times, although it's likely that the religion had not been entirely wiped out after the departure of the Romans.

The ruins of Reculver Abbey, north-east of Herne Bay, founded by King Egbert of Wessex in the late 7th century, stand next to mighty towers added by the Normans on the site of a former Roman fort. They have served as a landmark for sailors navigating the coast for centuries.

Getting there: at Reculver, three miles east of Herne Bay, satnav: CT6 6SS

5 St Augustine's Abbey

Further inland, every tourist makes a beeline for Canterbury Cathedral, but few may be aware of the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey, just outside the city walls and built not long after the holy man from Rome's arrival.

It was constructed to serve as the last resting place of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and St Aethelbert – the king of Kent who greeted Augustine so warily at first before finally supporting his work and converting to Christianity – was buried here in 616.

Getting there: in Longport, Canterbury, 0.25 mile east of Cathedral Close, satnav: CT1 1PF

For the full Top 10 of the county's English Heritage attractions, see the latest issue of Kent Life magazine – IT'S OUT NOW!

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Portofino

New Year Riviera of Flowers, Monaco & Portofino

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£899pp
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27 December, 2013

Come with us for a New Year celebration holiday combining the glamour of the Cote d'Azur with that of the Riviera of Flowers and the festivities of New Year in a stunning location. We will see the sparkling illuminations that abound in the squares, gardens and fountains of Monaco - this tiny principality probably has some of the most stylish displays anywhere in Europe. We also include visits to Santa Margherita and the chic jet-setter resort of Portofino as well as San Remo and a Wine tasting experience at Isolabona.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras • Return Eurostar & TGV rail travel London St Pancras to Nice (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 1 night hotel B&B in Paris outbound • 6 nights in Diano Marina at the Piccolo Hotel, with buffet breakfasts and dinners and free drinks 6pm to 11pm every night - local brands of beer, wine & spirits • Gala Dinner on New Year's Eve • Excursions as stated • All transfers abroad

Menton Lemon Festival, Nice Carnival & Monaco

Escorted Rail Holiday from London & Ebbsfleet
8 days semi-all-inclusive
£849pp
Quote DF2-KOS

25 February, 2014

This super holiday, taking in the French Riviera's premiere Carnivals, starts with a glass of Champagne at St Pancras famous Champagne Bar before an escorted afternoon departure by Eurostar. On the Riviera enjoy Free Drinks every night, visits to Menton Lemon Festival, Nice carnival, Monaco and Cervo. We stay in Diano Marina, situated on Italy's Riviera of Flowers, a pretty seaside town with stylish, chic shops and pavement cafés with a relaxed atmosphere as well as a long promenade. Our hotel is centrally located a short walk from the sea and the town centre.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Champagne Check-in • Return Eurostar & TGV rail travel London St Pancras to Nice (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 1 night hotel B&B in Paris outbound • 6 nights in Diano Marina at the Piccolo Hotel, with buffet breakfasts and dinners and free drinks 6pm to 11pm every night - local brands of beer, wine & spirits • Included visits to Menton Lemon Festival and Nice Carnival parades plus Monaco and Cervo • Return rail travel to London • All transfers abroad

Monaco Historic Grand Prix & Portofino

Escorted Rail Holiday from London & Ebbsfleet
8 days semi-all-inclusive
£949pp
Quote HG5-KOS

6 May, 2014

This super holiday taking in the Monaco Historic Grand Prix and the Italian Riviera, starts with a glass of Bubbly at St Pancras (Ebbsfleet departures on request) before taking an afternoon Eurostar to Lille or Paris. After an overnight stay, we continue by TGV train to Nice and Diano Marina. On the Riviera enjoy Free Drinks every night, grandstand tickets for the Historic Grand Prix, and visits to Portofino & Dolceacqua.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Champagne Check-in at London St Pancras • Return Eurostar & TGV rail travel London St Pancras to Nice (from Ebbsfleet on request) • 1 night hotel B&B in Paris or Lille outbound • 6 nights in Diano Marina at the Piccolo Hotel, with buffet breakfasts and dinners and free drinks 6pm to 11pm every night - local brands of beer, wine & spirits • Return coastal train ticket to Monaco & Grandstand seated ticket for Historic Grand Prix Race day • Excursions as stated • All transfers abroad

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Ferry firm in calmer waters for birthday

CROSS-Channel operator MyFerryLink celebrated its first birthday by presenting a traveller with a bottle of Champagne.

The firm, which emerged from the ashes of SeaFrance, has proved a popular addition to the short-crossing route but it has not been without its issues.

Earlier this year, owner Eurotunnel was told by the Competition Commission it was to drop the service as a result of it having an unfair advantage.

Eurotunnel chairman and CEO Jacques Gounon says he remains confident the decision will not be upheld by the UK's Competition Appeal Tribunal.

Also, earlier this summer, Eurotunnel reported an 18 million euro loss as a consequence of launching the service.

The service celebrated, however, by giving Paul Higgins, who was travelling on the Dover to Calais service, en route to the Czech Republic, a bottle of bubbly.

Entrepreneurs help inspire newcomers

THE School for Creative Startups and Kent County Council celebrated the launch of their new partnership at Folkestone's Quarterhouse recently.

The evening brought together some of the county's most successful entrepreneurs, along with Kent-based alumni from the successful London incarnation of the programme, that will see 100 of the county's budding entrepreneurs receive a combination of mentoring, coaching and support to help get their fledgling creative enterprises off the ground.

Normally costing participants £3,500 each, KCC is fully funding 100 places on this Folkestone-based programme for residents, business owners or those intending to start a business in the county.

Doug Richard, founder of the School for Creative Startups, said: "One of the things I take exception to is the notion that entrepreneurs are born, when the reality is that by creating the right ecosystem, pretty much anyone can start a business.

"All economies grow on the back of enterprise because when people start new businesses, they provide jobs, generate revenue and draw in prosperity.

"The best prosperity is that which creates the highest wealth, and creative industries are at the top of that spectrum."

If you have a business story, then we would like to hear from you. Telephone the newsdesk on **01303 817000**, or alternatively email your story to **editorial@kosmedia.co.uk**

Rates retention at hub airport would be a 'cash bonanza' insist supporters

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

A PRESSURE group in support of proposals to build a multi-million pound international airport hub in the Thames Estuary says local authorities opposing any such scheme are turning down the chance to make a fortune through business rates.

Demand Regneration in North Kent (Drink) has been a lone voice locally in support of the controversial plans – first touted by London Mayor Boris Johnson – to site an alternative to Heathrow off the Kent coast.

Now it is claiming the airport could deliver a £100 million annual boost to the local authorities, but that the area is "turning up its nose" at the prospect.

It claims changes to business rates would mean a "cash bonanza" through the business rates retention scheme, which came into force in April of this year. This allows councils to retain a percentage of rates.

But council chiefs have slammed the claims, saying such a development would turn north Kent into a "concrete jungle" and that both local and national politicians of all parties had opposed the proposals.

Financial experts also suggest it would be "highly unlikely" the distribution of business rates would be so straightforward.

Drink claims up to 50 per cent of business rates could go straight into local authority coffers and points to the UK's only hub airport, Heathrow, as currently generating some £203m per year in business rates. From that figure it extrapolates an airport in the Thames Estuary could deliver £100m to local councils.

Its chairman, Neville Gaunt, said: "The whole of north Kent urgently needs to find more cash to reduce poverty and raise living standards for half a million local people.

PROPOSALS: One of the hub airport designs

"This business rate boost is one way that a new airport could solve this problem at a stroke.

"Yet all councils are steadfast in their opposition to the project on what seems to be purely emotional grounds and appear to be doing very little to find ways to make life better for our community.

"This proof that a new hub airport in the area would bring a big cash benefit must bring about a change of heart by local politicians. Where else will they get revenue of that size?"

However, one financial expert we spoke to said the reality was that if an airport was built the business rates baseline would shift, meaning even if the airport generated such sums, far less would go to the local councils and more to central government for redistribution. In addtion, they pointed to likely changes in the way business rates are distributed over the coming years.

Meanwhile, Medway Council, one of the most vocal opponents to the airport plans, says Drink is missing the point.

A spokesman said: "We simply do not understand Drink's claims that you can improve the lives of local people by forcing them to live next to a huge new hub airport that would serve twice as many passengers as Heathrow.

"It would also turn the area where they live into a concrete jungle, as hundreds of thousands of new houses would be needed for all the people that would move into the area to work at such an airport, and many more roads and railways would also need to be built.

"Medway's 55 councillors from across political groups unanimously agree that an international airport should not be imposed on this area.

"Thankfully, a broad consensus of national politicians, key figures in the airline industry, City commentators and local people agree with them on this and the reasons why we say an airport of this size is not needed on or near the Thames Estuary.

"It would be too costly, it would be on the wrong side of London and it would undoubtedly lead to the closure of Heathrow, which would be very bad for the British economy.

"There is a huge amount of capacity already available at the five London airports that already serve London, plus others further afield such as Birmingham and Manston, and we should look to using this up rather than wasting tens of billions of pounds of taxpayers' cash on such a pie in the sky scheme as a Thames Estuary airport."

EE throws net wider for 4G as rivals finally enter the fray

THE ability to do business on the move has been enhanced after 4G mobile phone network EE flicked the switch on more key areas of the county this week.

As announced earlier in the year, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Ashford now join Medway, Maidstone and Tonbridge, which have already been given access to the higher speeds.

Designed to replace existing 3G as the high-speed standard, 4G offers five-times faster downloads and is being heavily promoted to both the business and consumer user.

EE – Everything Everywhere – has a commercial advantage over its rivals with exclusivity on rolling out the new technology; much like the 3 network did for 3G.

It is looking to secure as much market share as possible now before rivals start delivering their own services, and has hired Hollywood actor Kevin Bacon, pictured, for a string of high profile TV and radio advertisements.

Some have hinted that, unlike EE, there will not be an added premium to use the 4G network.

O2 and Vodafone launched their services this week, while 3's is next month. However, as with all mobile services, its success or otherwise will be determined by availability.

Already available to 60 per cent of the population, Kent's rural nature is often a stumbling block.

Rikki Lear, regional manager for Kent and Sussex at EE, said: "The expansion of 4G mobile broadband services is great for customers.

"Residents and businesses can do more on the move around the region, sharing content, streaming from the web and working online, no matter where they are."

According to EE, recent research has demonstrated 4G is changing the way customers use their mobiles, with streaming and sharing more important than ever.

One in four ultra-social Britons check social apps more than 10 times a day on their 4G smartphone or tablet, with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram the favourite social media apps over 4G.

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University library's £18m facelift to become modern learning space

REFURB: Library to get facelift

THE University of Kent's Templeman Library is to get an £18 million facelift.

The work, due to be carried out by Kier Construction, will see the library, first opened in 1965 and at the heart of the Canterbury campus, modernised.

Kier Construction will work closely with architects Penoyre & Prasad to provide a 5,200sq metre five-floor extension to the existing library and extensive refurbishment of the original building.

Operations director at Kier, Peter Searle, said: "The newly refurbished library will provide a contemporary learning environment for the many students who will learn here now, and in the future, ensuring the Templeman Library continues its enduring and pivotal role within the campus for many years to come." Work is due to start on site imminently.

Top forensic scientist takes on lecturing role

ONE of the UK's leading forensic science experts has been taken on by the University of Kent's school of physical sciences.

Robert Green OBE, who has over 30 years experience and worked as a senior crime scene manager with Kent Police, joins as director of undergraduate studies and senior lecturer in forensic science. He said: "My ambition is to help produce outstanding forensic science graduates both academically qualified and professionally connected."

College teams up with Costa in careers scheme

CANTERBURY College has teamed up with Costa Coffee to recruit and train baristas for the chain's newest branch, based in Canterbury.

The seven trainee staff members taken on through the college's training and recruitment service (CTR) were previously unemployed, some for more than six months.

Costa Canterbury branch manager April Eames said: "The CTR course has been a real confidence booster for our new baristas."

CLASSROOM: Kent's FSB says young people need to be equipped and ready for the world of work

Calls for students to be taught workplace skills

BUSINESS leaders in Kent are calling on the Government to ensure planned GCSE reforms will equip students with the right skills for the workplace.

It follows the end of a consultation into the overhaul, which is aimed at making the exams more rigorous and challenging.

At the heart of the reforms is emphasis on final summer exams rather than coursework and year-long assessments.

The Government is also looking at implementing more traditionalist values, including a greater range of literature being studied in English, a greater focus on British history, more problem-solving tasks and complex algebra in maths, and improved spelling, punctuation and grammar across the board.

Ministers are currently looking at core subjects, such as English, maths and science, but this shake-up, if agreed, will be rolled out to apply to all subjects.

But the Kent branch of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has warned that the planned overhaul needs to take into account equipping students with the right skills for the workplace.

Chair Roger House says it is vital changes do not just focus on grades alone, warning that employers need the staff for the future to have much wider skills, such as communication, problem-solving and a good attitude to work.

Research by the FSB also suggests small firms believe numeracy and literacy are skills lacking in young people.

The Kent branch said the Government should consider a pass/fail exam for these functional skills giving employers a clearer understanding of ability.

Mr House said those about to leave education also need to know they have been taught skills needed for today's competitive workplace.

"FSB Kent wants to see employability and personal skills embedded in everyday teaching and schools must focus on this alongside academic rigour," he said.

"Young people need to know about business; what the workplace expects of them and how to pursue careers that suit their skills.

"They also need to be inspired. With any changes to the GCSE system, the Government must ensure they are clearly communicated to employers so they know what they mean."

Mr House also said there needed to be more time in the school day committed to giving students quality careers education and guidance.

He added: "Many of Kent's small businesses are keen to play their part to help improve employability skills and to teach young people about business and the workplace.

"Our members are already involved with charities such as Young Enterprise or sit on schools' governing bodies. Business recognises the role it has to play and we will be participating in events to help bring businesses, schools and colleges together to forge lasting partnerships."

What is your business doing to help Keep Kent Working? Do you send employees on training courses to aid their personal development or run apprenticeship schemes? If you have a good-news story, email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or call us on 01303 817000.

Automotive students get lesson in pit stop

FOUR East Kent College automotive students made a pit stop at Brands Hatch after impressing a judging panel with their knowledge and skills.

Securing the runners-up title in a competition involving East Kent, Mid-Kent, North West and K Colleges, Josh Dalton, 18; Rob Brockhouse, 20; Josh Hill, 21; and Adam Pryce, 18, were treated to a visit to the Longfield track by owner of Broadstairs MOT centre Simon Hooper, who had been one of the judges.

They had a chance to see three racing Porsches, worth £350,000 each, and witness first hand the fast pace of pit-stops, the tight teamwork and the technology involved in race preparation.

They then watched a race in the hospitality box courtesy of two other Thanet businessmen, Simon Wallace from SW Flooring and Andy Burnap of Elec-Sec, who both assist in nurturing young talent.

Mr Hooper – who is also a race mechanic for the British GT series' Trackspeed team – said: "I think the day inspired the students to see just how far you can go as a motor mechanic or technician.

"If you work hard enough, you can travel the world and be part of something very exciting and at the forefront of technology."

Crowds expected at major networking event

MOTIVATIONAL speaker Derek Arden and leading property investor Caroline Marsh will be among the keynote speakers at a major free event taking place in Canterbury next month.

Organised by the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, the B2B 2013 event takes place on September 10 at Augustine House.

Designed to nurture business development and sustained growth for exhibitors and visitors alike, more than 80 Kent companies will be exhibiting.

In addition, there will be workshops, speakers and organised 'speed networking' sessions running throughout the day.

Mr Arden, a regular on TV and radio, will present Negotiate to Achieve the Impossible, while Ms Marsh, who shot to fame on Channel 4's Secret Millionaire, will also deliver a keynote speech focusing on her rise to fame and business success.

Explains Mr Arden: "There are two kinds of people in the world: those who negotiate and those who don't. So there are also two prices in the world; the price for those who negotiate and the price for those who don't.

"Every day, businesses spend far too much money on everything from stationary, to premises, to accountancy fees.

"At this very moment profits are at their lowest and costs are very high. However, it doesn't have to be that way.

"A good rule of thumb is to begin by assuming that everything is negotiable – and to have planned in advance what you want to achieve. With a pound of preparation, an ounce of bravery and a pinch of competitiveness, everyone can get a better deal.

"Remember, your first negotiation is always with yourself. Make sure you believe that everything and anything is negotiable – even the impossible – because it is."

Among the workshops will be a focus on exporting, presented by UK Trade and Investment, pensions, sustainability and an interactive workshop from the Design Council on tips and techniques for business growth.

Explains Jo James, chief executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce: "What you have to accept is that everyone at a networking event will be as nervous as you are.

"They also want to make new contacts, learn new things and find new people to do business with. Speed Networking sessions at the B2B allow both networking novices and old hands to practice the art of networking in a safe, controlled environment."

Why it's a case of sleepless nights on holiday for business leaders

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

THE eagerly-anticipated summer break should be the chance to forget about work and recharge your batteries.

But according to a recent survey, the county's business leaders are finding it increasingly difficult to let the stresses go, prompting a renewed call to ensure you have a system in place for someone to competently take over the reins while you relax on a beach somewhere.

The survey, by Investors in People South, discovered 31 per cent of those quizzed said they worried about returning to work after a holiday in case problems occurred while they were away.

Despite this, 90 per cent said they felt confident the business would run smoothly while they were away, possibly because more than half (58 per cent) contact their employees while on leave.

John Telfer, managing director of Investors in People South, which manages the Investors in People Standard in Kent, said: "It can be difficult to relax on holiday, especially as technology now means it is easier than ever to contact the office and check your emails while away.

"However, it means that bosses never really relax and it is not a long-term solution for the future of the business – there has to be someone who could fulfil your duties in your absence.

"Organisations need to have a succession plan in place, whether it is to cover a fortnight's holiday or a key member of staff leaving, becoming sick or retiring. Employers must ask themselves how the business would cope if certain employees were no longer working for the company."

Sixty per cent of respondents confirmed they have a succession plan in place covering key roles in the organisation.

"It's great news that the majority of companies are planning for the future," continued Mr Telfer. "However, there are obviously a considerable number that need to review their business plan, identify key skills needed within the organisation and nurture the talent of employees rising through the ranks. Having an engaged and flexible workforce, ready to step up when required, is key to long-term success."

The survey quizzed 100 business people from across the region between August 2 to 22.

BE PREPARED: John Telfer urges business leaders to let themselves take a break

BUSINESS IN BRIEF

Investment firm joins expanding community

INDEPENDENT financial planning and investment expert European Wealth is one of four companies to recently relocate to rural offices at East Malling.

The company has moved from Maidstone town centre into a 1,400 sq ft first floor office in Park House, situated in the grounds of the East Malling Trust Estate.

European Wealth is joined by fellow newcomers Accountancy & Taxation Centre Ltd and Technical Lift Consultancy Ltd. Meanwhile, traditional sweet shop Gemz and Mags has taken space in The Oast, which forms part of the East Malling Business Centre. Waste paper recyclers Harmon International has also swapped one East Malling office for another.

Caxtons win tender for key industrial site

CAXTONS Chartered Surveyors has been appointed joint commercial agent for a prime industrial development site in south east London.

Standard Life Investments selected the firm to market the 4.06 acre site on Crabtree Manorway North, Belvedere.

Caxtons director Mark Coxon, said: "The site presents a rare opportunity for a business to develop and build a facility tailored to their needs."

Olympic safety chief joins Eurotunnel team

GROUPE Eurotunnel has appointed a new safety chief for the Channel Tunnel site.

Philippe de Lagune, who previously held the post of French safety coordinator for the London 2012 Olympic Games, joins the firm on September 9 as safety and ethics directors.

M de Lagune has worked within the French government - including roles in the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office - for many years.

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First GEAR MOTORING NEWS

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- Hyundai's i35 has a better price tag
- Customers vote Jag dealers the best

Golf's green drivers can now choose petrol over diesel cars

Driving

Powered by motors.co.uk

drive24.co.uk

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

'CHARACTERFUL' is the kindest description of the styling, but the abilities of the Fiat 500L Trekking might grow on you this winter.

It's a spin-off from the capacious Fiat 500L mini-MPV launched last year – a car I think of as 'enormously small' to avoid the Tardis motoring cliché (oops) – and justifies its Trekking label through limited off-road capability.

I say limited, but it's all the yomping power that most owners need, and delivered without the weight and expense of a 4x4.

Instead, the Trekking (from £17,095) makes use of grippy all-season tyres and clever traction control on its front-driving wheels to mimic 4x4 ability. Fiat calls the system Traction+, available at up to 18.6mph and transferring grip from right to left front wheel, according to which has most grip.

Sod's Law dictated that conditions were bone-dry during my test drive, but the Trekking conquered a course where even mashed-up grass and clay might have troubled a conventional front-wheel-drive car.

And we will surely see more 'soft-roading' cars with Traction+ equivalents as car-makers realise many customers won't now pay to buy and run a 4x4 when its capabilities are so rarely needed.

What the Trekking won't do is conquer a bumpy and muddy field; what it will do is beat challenging tracks and hills when there's snow on the road, the latter being exactly what brings the school run to a halt in my village with the first dustings of winter snow.

It also has 10 per cent extra ground clearance for the occasional off-road foray, plus underbody shielding and chunkier bumpers.

Other than these, everything else is 500L: a cavernous and stylish cabin within an easily-pilotable on-road footprint, with good grip and minimal body-roll for a relatively tall car.

Standard kit includes air-con, five-inch infotainment touchscreen with Bluetooth, cruise-control and smart 17-inch alloys.

It is also the first Fiat with City Brake Control as standard: this automatically brakes between 3mph and 19mph if it calculates a frontal collision is inevitable, avoiding those classics such as the car-park ding or when checking right on filtering into traffic only to find that the car in front has braked rather than joined the flow as expected.

Trekking engine options are: a 95bhp 1.4-litre version of Fiat's tried-and-tested FIRE petrol unit, the 105bhp 0.9-litre TwinAir petrol that can be sporty or thrifty depending on your driving style, and diesels of 1.3 (85bhp) and 1.6 (105bhp) litres.

Fiat seems to have thought of everything for the family user. OK, the 500 badge bears little relation to the pretty retro 500 supermini, but Fiat clearly hopes some of the Cinquecento charm is rubbing off on big sister, joined in September by an even bigger sibling, the seven-seat 500L MPW.

FIRST DRIVE — FIAT 500L TREKKING

Price: from £17,095
Driving appeal: ★★★
Image: ★★★★
Space: ★★★★★
Value: ★★★★★
Running costs: ★★★★★
Reliability: ★★★★
How green?: ★★★★
Best rival: Mini Countryman

'Enormously small' soft-roader

OFF-ROAD: Traction+ gives the Fiat 500L Trekking 'soft-roading' capabilities, but its links with the 500's stylings are somewhat tenuous

DON'T LIKE

... the styling. The 500L's efficient interior makes it hard to look good on the outside, so buyers must use customisation options fully.

NOT SURE

... too many buyers will be fooled by tenuous links with the 500 supermini, but the Trekking's special abilities do have their own family appeal.

REALLY LIKE

... the overall Trekking package: affordable, practical and spacious yet compact on-road, with all the off-road clout most users will need.

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Fiat, the car brand with the lowest average CO_2 emissions in Europe^. Fuel consumption figures for the Fiat 500L Trekking range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 33.6 (8.4) – 60.1 (4.7); Extra Urban 53.3 (5.3) – 74.3 (3.8); Combined 44.1 (6.4) – 67.3 (4.2). CO_2 emissions 149 – 109 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.^Source: JATO Dynamics. Based on volume-weighted average CO_2 emissions (g/km) of the best selling brands in Europe, full year 2012.

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Petrol Golf that thinks it's a diesel

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

HAVING been such a champion of diesel engines and modern-day motoring's economy drive, Volkswagen seems hell-bent on creating a rival – the petrol engine.

The German giant has led a reinvention of the type through a new generation of small, parsimonious petrol engines with a wild side – turbocharged to supply decent urge when required.

With the arrival of the all-new Golf hatchback last year, it then followed up with a petrol engine masquerading as a diesel – probably the best Golf model you can buy.

The 1.4TSI ACT returns 58.9mpg on the official combined cycle; OK, that's still not up with the 70-plus mpg of equivalent Golf diesels, but it's impressive for a petrol unit and CO_2 emissions are modest, too, qualifying this relatively powerful 140PS (138bhp) engine for road-tax-exemption in year one and just £30 annually after that.

At the same time, this version is a keen driver's delight, with loads of low-down power and the ability to hit 62mph in 8.4 seconds.

The secret of this apparently contradictory mix of economy and sportiness is concealed within those three letters ACT – Active Cylinder Technology.

Quite simply, the engine automatically shuts down two of its four cylinders when it recognises the driver's right foot going into 'cruise mode' on a straight and untroubled stretch of road – a dashboard indicator helps educate the driver to find the system's sweet spot.

Best of all, though, is how the car's overall Dr Jekyll miserliness makes you feel better about sometimes unleashing the spendthrift Mr Hyde, turning this GT into a cut-price GTI.

VW saved about 100 kilos in the latest and seventh-generation Golf and it shows best in the alacrity and nimbleness of this version. The lightweight engine should also be easier on tyre wear and front-end mechanicals. This takes running costs closer to diesel equivalents and makes tempting alternatives out of the three GT ACT models – three- and five-door with six-speed manual gearbox, with the £1,415 option of a dual-clutch auto cum manual DCT box on the latter.

And though ACT prices from £22,515 might look dear against sporty rivals in the same class, you won't enjoy the same fuel economy, mainstream/premium image or such robust second-hand values.

Admittedly, some might argue that the Golf's styling is conservative, but it is a classy and all-new evolution of the previous car.

Interior refinement is excellent, too, making you feel you are in a car from the class above in terms of space and luxury. The Golf is now longer and wider, boosting legroom for all aboard and adding significantly to shoulder room.

If you expected all this extra breathing space in the cabin to be at the expense of the boot, you'd be wrong; 380 litres is at the top end for a family hatchback and this combines with a low loading lip and fold-flat rear seats if you need 1,270 litres of total cargo area.

Don't go looking for cabin razzamatazz, though; VW always aims to make the Golf the benchmark by which all other rivals are judged, so the facia and dashboard are functional rather than flashy, showing quality understatement.

However, I would happily accept that for the driving experience – a flat stance and tight grip comes as standard – and the supporting role played by the excellent front seats.

And the Golf experience is no longer as expensive for some: a new turbocharged 85PS (84bhp) 1.2-litre petrol entry model was added to the range recently, costing an attractive £16,495.

QUALITY: The Golf is functional rather than flashy, but with all the drive and economy details added up it's a very appealing motor

VW GOLF GT 1.4 TSI ACT 140 PS 5-DR: PRICE £23.170

Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
Reliability:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Road tax:	£30 (zero year one)
Best rival:	Ford Focus 1.6T Ecoboost

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First GEAR
MOTORING NEWS

Handling is better for Soul

KIA has unveiled its second-generation Soul urban crossover, due here next spring.

The Korean marque has sensibly retained the same style as the original car, but the new version is based on the latest Kia Ceed platform and expected to enjoy enhanced handling and refinement, while Kia also claims improved emissions, plus more interior and luggage space.

New look i35 is cheaper

KOREAN sister brand Hyundai says the facelift version of its big-selling ix35 compact SUV goes on sale from September, priced from £16,995 – £560 below pre-change entry price.

Key features are further enhancement of an already-generous list of standard kit, better efficiency and fuel consumption from modified powertrains and chassis and suspension upgrades for better ride and handling.

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JAGUAR dealerships have taken first place for the second year running in the annual JD Power Dealer Satisfaction Survey in What Car?

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PRIDE OF LIONS: Peugeot's newly-launched 208 GTi proudly wears the new '63 plate

New Reg '63

Switch to eco helps boost UK car market

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

MOTOR-INDUSTRY chiefs have steadily become more bullish about car sales and now forecast more than 2.2 million new registrations by year end – an 8.4 per cent increase on 2012.

The SMMT (Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders) had its hopes further fuelled by a 17th successive monthly rise in July – 12.7 per cent higher than July 2012.

SMMT spokesman Mike Baunton said: "We've seen a range of economic indicators point to improving conditions and our raised sales forecast emphasises how positively we view the rest of 2013."

Motorists switching to more fuel-efficient cars is part of the trend, and this helped reduce average new-car CO_2 emissions to 129.1g/km in early 2013, down 3.7 per cent.

But there may also be a realisation that, with their savings moribund and low rate finance available, a newer and more economical car can represent a good deal, especially as the influential Auto Express magazine celebrated its 25th anniversary this week by claiming that the cost of a new car hasn't risen that much in a quarter-century when adjusted for inflation. It looked at the cost of a basket of items – petrol and oil, car tax and insurance, housing, milk, bread, beer, cigarettes and postage – and found the percentage of change in new-car purchase prices well below those of other key items.

While car tax and insurance, and fuel and oil prices, were constantly above the rate of inflation between 1993 and 2008, car prices were lower over the same period.

Last year, even those motoring overheads fell below the rate of inflation, in sharp contrast to the two most inflationary purchases: postage and cigarettes, respectively.

Auto Express editor-in-chief Steve Fowler argued that buyers get more for their money: "The average of all car prices has risen from £12,207 in 1988 to £27,219 in 2012 – a sizeable increase. Yet when you take into account the improvements in economy, safety, reliability, comfort and technology across the market, today's cars represent remarkable value compared to 25 years ago."

HOT OFF THE PRODUCTION LINE: Stylish new Renault Captur should help post 2.2 million new car registrations by the end of the year

NEW REG '63

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Superminis lead the sales charge

SMALL is beautiful for UK buyers.

It marks a complete reversal from 20 years ago when family saloons/company cars ruled the market.

But soaring fuel and insurance costs, greater environmental awareness and punitive road tax on larger cars, plus ever-more stylish small cars, weakened the power of key models like the Ford Sierra and Mondeo and former Vauxhall Vectra.

In their place, the supermini and even smaller city car have carved a 40 per cent share of new-car sales, followed by family hatchbacks with about 25 per cent of registrations.

It might not be long, though, before family hatchbacks are under threat, too, from the new kid on the block, the crossover. As the name implies, this straddles several sectors by being part family hatch, part MPV (multi-purpose vehicle) or people-carrier and part SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle) – cars like the Hyundai ix35, Kia Sportage, Renault Captur, Vauxhall Mokka and Peugeot 3008.

In the meantime, registration figures so far this year from the motor-industry mouthpiece, the SMMT, show how superminis (S) and family hatchbacks (H) still rule the UK top 10:

1. Ford Fiesta (S)
2. Ford Focus (H)
3. Vauxhall Corsa (S)
4. Vauxhall Astra (H)
5. VW Golf (H)
6. Nissan Qashqai
7. VW Polo (S)
8. BMW 3-Series
9. Peugeot 208 (S)
10. BMW 1 Series (H)

SUPERMINI STYLE: Clockwise from top: Hyundai's i20 supermini is the downsizing favourite; The Skoda Fabia is the budget small star; Alfa Romeo's eye-catching MiTo has real style

Maidstone Kia 675 London Road, Ditton, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 6DF **01732 878950**

Motability

Fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the range of Kia models shown are: Urban 33.6 (8.4) – 80.7 (3.5), Extra Urban 53.3 (5.3) – 94.2 (3.0), Combined 44.1 (6.4) – 88.3 (3.2). CO_2 emissions are 150 – 85g/km. MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. 7 year /100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty. For terms and exclusions visit kia.co.uk or see your local dealer. Price, Reevoo score and number of reviews correct at time of going to press and specification is subject to change without notice. Models shown: Picanto 'City' 1.0 @ £8,995 On The Road (OTR), including customer saving of £1,250; Rio 5-dr '2' 1.25 @ £11,095 On The Road (OTR) including £1,400 customer saving and excluding optional metallic paint at £455; cee'd '1' 1.4 manual @ £13,500 OTR including customer saving of £900 and excluding optional metallic paint at £475. OTR price includes VAT, number plates, delivery, 12 months' Government Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) and Vehicle First Registration Fee. Retail customers only. Subject to availability on vehicles registered between 01 July and 30 September 2013. * 4.9% APR available on Kia Conditional Sale on all models. 10% minimum deposit required on cee'd models only. Maximum term of 36 months. Offer not available in conjunction with any other offer. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. 18's or over. Guarantees / Indemnities may be required. Kia Motors Finance RH1 1SR. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers. We may receive a commission from them for the introduction. Customer savings vary by model derivative. Ask your dealer for full details. †£99 insurance applies to Kia Picanto 'City', Picanto 5-dr '1 Air', Rio '2', cee'd '1' and cee'd Sportswagon '1' and is available from Kia Motors Insurance Services for drivers aged 21-80 at participating Kia dealers only. Subject to standard underwriters terms and acceptance criteria. Eligibility criteria for this offer also applies; go to kia.co.uk/insurance for full details. The £99 offer is restricted to a maximum premium of £1,500. For any premium over this amount, the customer must pay the difference. Kia Motors Insurance Services is arranged and administered by Equity Direct Broking Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Financial Services Register number 490061. 01780

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The crop-top... fun for all seasons?

IT has been a typically erratic British summer, yet this country remains one of the most enthusiastic supporters of convertibles.

Perhaps it is the urge to celebrate an all-too-rare sunny day that makes us want to drive 'topless' and get the wind in our hair whenever the opportunity arises.

Then there's the heritage factor: markets all around the globe bought into the affordable British open-top motoring phenomenon as our car-makers were exhorted to export and pull the country out of the post-Second World War depression.

But it was still a niche market and, as the UK car industry declined, companies felt they could not divert valuable research and development into replacements.

Classics like the MGB were allowed to become outmoded, and the few imported convertibles tended to be flaky or exorbitant luxuries.

Then Mazda created the MX-5 in the late 1980s, inspired by the old Triumphs and MGs but offering a balance and reliability they could never emulate – the market took off again.

As more crop-tops arrived, so the quality of weather and sound insulation also improved and heated-glass rear screens became the norm. Some premium models also came with an electrically-raised/lowered roof.

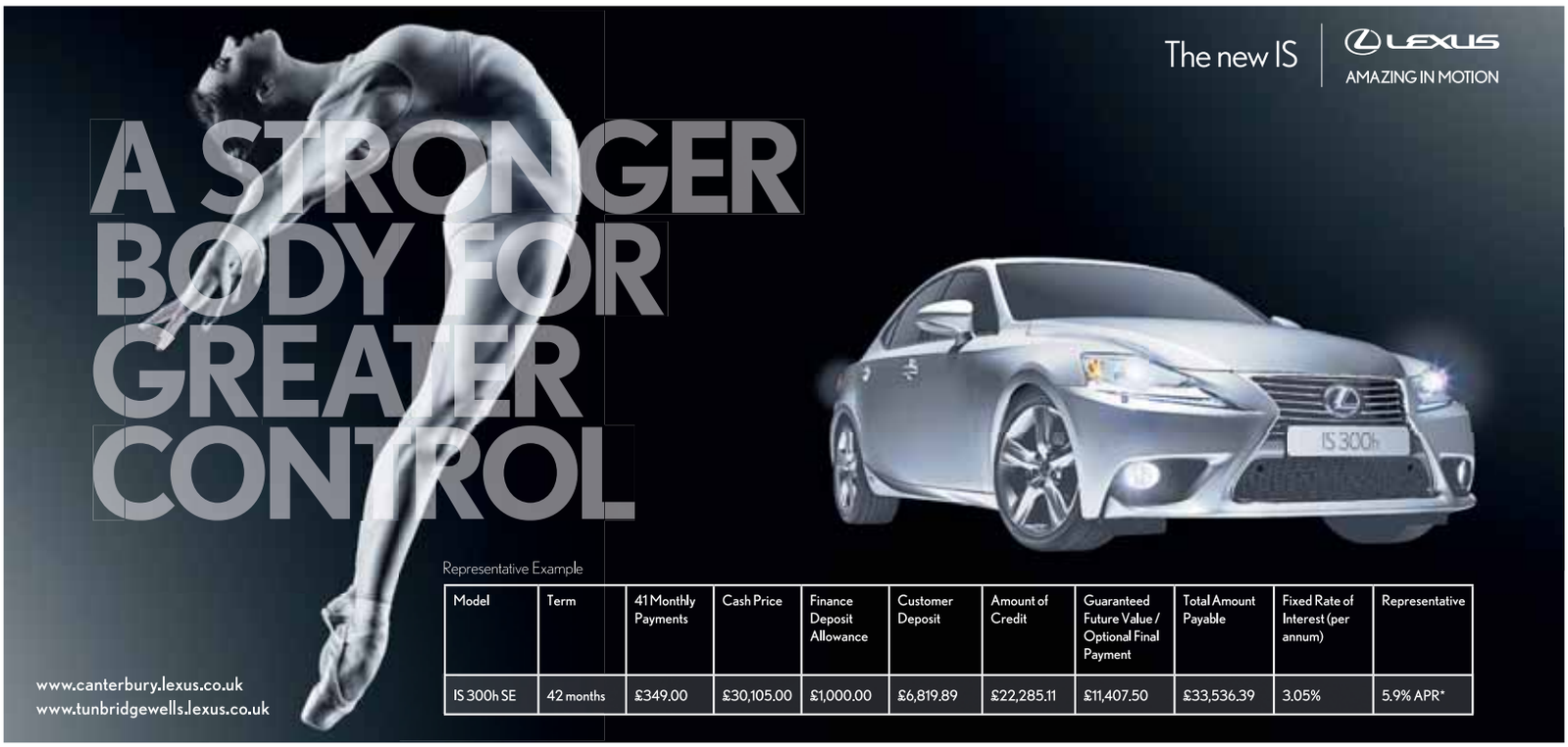
Then Mercedes-Benz made headlines by launching the folding hard-top two-seat SLK roadster in 1996.

Others rushed to copy the idea as many buyers realised that their dream convertible could also be a car for all seasons... one you could even claim as your company car!

INSPIRATIONAL: The 1996 predecessor to the Mercedes-Benz SLK pioneered the modern folding hard-top

GLASS CLASS: Renault's Megane Coupe Cabriolet has folding glass hard-top

ALL-YEAR FUN: Peugeot's 308CC also has a folding hard-top



Representative Example

Model	Term	41 Monthly Payments	Cash Price	Finance Deposit Allowance	Customer Deposit	Amount of Credit	Guaranteed Future Value / Optional Final Payment	Total Amount Payable	Fixed Rate of Interest (per annum)	Representative
IS 300h SE	42 months	£349.00	£30,105.00	£1,000.00	£6,819.89	£22,285.11	£11,407.50	£33,536.39	3.05%	5.9% APR*

Take a test drive at: LEXUS CANTERBURY Broad Oak Road, Canterbury CT2 7PX 01227 455553 LEXUS TUNBRIDGE WELLS Dowding Way, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN2 3UY 01892 700400

*5.9% APR Representative and £1,000 Finance Deposit Allowance available over 42 months on a Lexus Connect (PCP) scheme only on new retail sales of IS when ordered and proposed for finance between 1 July 2013 and 30 September 2013, registered and financed by 31 December 2013 through Lexus Financial Services, Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, Surrey KT18 5UZ at participating Lexus Centres. Other finance offers are available but cannot be used in conjunction with this offer. Terms and conditions apply. Excess mileage charge applies over 35,000 miles at 12 pence per mile. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s. Lexus Centre are independent of Lexus Financial Services. New IS prices start from £26,495 OTR. Model shown is IS 300h SE costing £30,105 including optional metallic paint at £610. Car shown not to UK specification. The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results. These are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

New IS Series Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 22.8 (12.4) – 64.2 (4.4), Extra Urban 38.7 (7.3) – 62.8 (4.5), Combined 30.7 (9.2) – 65.7 (4.3). CO_2 Emissions 213 g/km – 99 g/km.

NEW REG '63

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Going eco can also mean ECO-nomic

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

CANNY buyers know that eco motoring also means economic motoring.

So technology trumpeted as a way to save the planet has proved to be good for the wallet, too.

Many new models not only help to offset ever-rising fuel bills but also lower or even remove road-tax bills altogether; tax bandings range from zero for cars with the lowest CO_2 emissions (below 100g/km) right up to £1,065 a year for gas-guzzling limos or 4x4s.

Naturally, anyone spending £50,000-£100,000 on a car won't worry about small change like that, but most of us want to save on fuel and tax as well as help the environment.

Longer term, electric cars may be the answer, but battery technology must catch up and the emissions argument for electric is misleading. Until we have zero-emission power stations, electric cars simply transfer CO_2 and noxious gas output from exhaust pipe to belching chimney. Production of hydrogen to power our cars raises a similar dilemma.

Are hybrids the answer, then? Toyota, Honda and Peugeot lead here, pairing conventional engines with electric power and batteries.

However, hybrids tend to be dearer upfront, while conventional internal combustion engine running costs and emissions are dropping and efficiency increasing; things are moving so fast that you marvel at what Government prodding has achieved.

Most car-makers now have an eco sub brand: Hyundai offers Blue Drive and Skoda has the Greenline.

But weigh potential long-term savings against upfront cost – if you don't cover enough miles to make fuel savings offset the eco car's purchase price, conventional alternatives may be better.

Don't ignore petrol cars, either; the higher price of diesels and the fuel at the pumps must be compared with new small-capacity low-emission/consumption yet lively turbocharged petrol engines.

EFFICIENT: Clockwise from top right... saving money with the Kia Rio range, Ecoflex versions of the Vauxhall Astra, and the Lexus CT200h hybrid

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†**0% APR representative Solutions offer** available on selected new ŠKODA models with deposits from 0–30%, subject to underwriting. *£69 example based on Citigo Hatch 1.0 MPI SE 3dr, Cash price £8,780: 36-month Solutions agreement, 10,000 miles per annum and with a customer deposit of £2,426.28, 35 monthly payments of £69, followed by an optional final purchase payment of £3,938.72 – total amount to be financed £6,353.72. Deposit shown may be higher than the minimum; a lower deposit will result in increased monthly payments. Further charges may be payable if vehicle is returned. Excess mileage charged at 4.4p per mile. For finance, terms and conditions apply. Indemnities may be required. Subject to status. Over 18s in mainland UK only. Excludes Channel Islands. ŠKODA Finance, Freepost, ŠKODA Finance. We can introduce you to a limited number of lenders to assist with your purchase, who may pay us for introducing you to them. Prices and specifications are accurate at time of print. Offers may be varied or withdrawn at any time and are not available in conjunction with any other offer. Retail sales only. Subject to availability on orders placed before 30 September 2013. **Free servicing up to 3 years or 30,000 miles (whichever comes first) when purchased with ŠKODA Solutions. ‡Model exclusions apply. Models shown vary from UK specification.

Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) to 68.9 (4.1), Extra Urban 36.2 (7.8) to 94.2 (3.0), Combined 27.7 (10.2) to 83.1 (3.4). CO_2 emissions for the ŠKODA range 237 to 89g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

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RENAULT

The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the new Clio core range are: Urban 40.4 (7)–78.5 (3.6); Extra Urban 60.1 (4.7)–94.2 (3); Combined 51.4 (5.5)–88.3 (3.2). The official CO_2 emissions for the range are 127–83g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO_2 may vary according to driving styles, road conditions and other factors.

4+ Terms and exclusions apply. Warranty 100,000 miles. Service 48,000 miles. Visit renault.co.uk/4plus for details. Finance provided by and insurance arranged by RCI Financial Services Limited, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. For finance, conditions apply. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. You must be at least 18 and a UK resident (excluding the Isle of Man and Channel Islands) to apply for finance. 1 year's insurance included is available to Renault Finance customers in the UK (excluding Isle of Man, Channel Islands and Northern Ireland) on any new Renault Clio Expression+ 1.2 16V 75 and Renault Clio Dynamique MediaNav 1.2 16V 75 when ordered and registered by 30 September 2013. Insurance underwriter shall be determined by RCI Financial Services Limited from time to time. Visit renault.co.uk/insurance for full terms and conditions. *Rental stated is for Renault Lease. Comparable payments are available on our personal contract purchase product – ask your dealer for details. If you choose Renault Lease then you will not own the car. When you have paid the final rental at the end of the contract, you can keep using the car and pay an annual rental equivalent to one monthly rental. Typical example: New Clio Dynamique MediaNav 1.2 16V 75, advance rental **£2000 inc VAT** followed by 48 monthly rentals of **£179 inc VAT**, final rental **£4583 inc VAT.** A finance facility fee of £149 is payable with the advance rental. Offers cannot be used in conjunction with other schemes or finance offers. Please check with your local dealer for details. Offers available to retail customers only. Cars shown may have optional metallic paint, available at an additional £495 (or £595 for Flame Red metallic paint).

NEW REG '63

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LOOK AFTER YOUR CAR: Modern cars like the British-made Honda Civic and the newly-launched Skoda Octavia are more reliable but they still need to be cared for to keep them in tip-top condition

Take care of your new 63-Reg motor

MANY car-owners used to service and maintain their cars themselves, but it's largely a job for the professional mechanic, or technician, as garages prefer to call them now.

And though modern cars are far more reliable than ever before, we still have a tendency to ignore faults and stretch service intervals far longer than we ought to, endangering the warranty and provenance of the vehicle when we come to sell.

So, having bought a new 63-Reg car, why don't you:

- Stick to the service record. Get it serviced at the correct mileages or annually and ensure the servicing book is stamped up, although some motor marques are switching to centralised digital records so that a car's servicing record is always available.
- Read the warranty thoroughly to ensure there are no possible pitfalls that could endanger the guarantee.
- Act on any recalls from the manufacturer, even if they do not relate specifically to safety – it will help maintain the warranty and future saleability of the car.
- Don't rely on the MOT as insurance of the car's safety and reliability, even if it has just passed the test with flying colours.

Problems can arise at any time and must be checked as soon as possible.

- Check lights regularly for safety and legality. Get used to 'lighting up' in the garage or when you are nosed in or backed up to a wall.
- Check tyres – including the spare – monthly... and that includes the correct pressures.

Though the legal tread depth is 1.6mm, most motoring authorities advise replacement at 2mm, especially in winter conditions.

- Keep oil, windscreen-washer, coolant, power-steering, clutch and brake-fluid levels topped up without overfilling, and make those checks on level ground. Don't wait for warning lights to come on; it could be too late to prevent damage or compromise safety.
- Replace wiper-blades. There is little point in keeping the washer topped up if the blades are worn or split. But if the windscreen is covered with bugs and grease, don't expect the washer and wipers to do the job for you – use a spray and elbow grease.

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The official fuel consumption in mpg (l/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km) for: the 107 range: Urban 52.3 – 55.4 (5.4 – 5.1), Extra Urban 70.6 – 74.3 (4.1 – 3.8), Combined 62.8 – 65.7 (4.5 – 4.3) and CO2 104 – 99; 208 range: Urban 34.9 – 78.4 (3.6 – 8.1), Extra Urban 62.8 – 88.2 (4.5 – 3.2), Combined 48.7 – 83.0 (5.8 – 3.4) and CO_2 135 – 87. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.
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*The first year Road Fund Licence (RFL) is included in the on the road price. The Dealer will provide customers with a cheque equivalent to twice the current RFL cost. The customer must apply for years 2 & 3 RFL. Just Add Fuel (JAF) is subject to status. †Minimum age 21, 25 or 30 on selected models, maximum age 75. Policyholder must have a minimum of 2 years NCD to use on the vehicle. All drivers must meet eligibility criteria including minimum 2 years' full UK licence, driving convictions/claims limits. Excesses apply. 3 years motor insurance is provided and underwritten by U K Insurance Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. A guarantee may be required. Written quotations available from Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA. JAF is incorporated into a Personal Lease contract. 107 Active 3 dr initial rental £1,805, optional final rental £4,072, 35 monthly rentals. 208 Active 1.0VTi 68 3dr initial rental £1,806, optional final rental £5,358, 35 monthly rentals. If you choose to pay off the optional final rental, you can pay an annual rental equivalent to one of your monthly rentals but will not own the car. Ownership is possible with JAF Passport, ask your Dealer for details. Rentals quoted for a typical customer and will vary according to age, post code and annual mileage. Excess mileage charges may apply. Routine servicing included only. Excludes wear parts. This offer is not available in N 1. Offer available on cars ordered and registered by 30th September 2013. Calls may be recorded for training purposes.

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† The Personal Contract Hire advertised is available on i10 Classic 1.2, i20 Classic 1.2 3dr and i30 Classic 1.4 models only. Rentals include VAT, start in the next calendar month and are based on an initial rental of £1,308 followed by 35 monthly rentals of £89 on i10 Classic 1.2, initial rental of £1,548 followed by 35 monthly rentals of £119 on i20 Classic 1.2 3dr, initial rental of £2,148 followed by 35 monthly rentals of £169 on i30 Active 1.4. The monthly rentals shown are based on a 36 month non-maintained agreement with metallic paint and with a mileage limitation of 10,000 miles per annum. Excess mileage and other charges may apply dependent on the mileage and condition of the vehicle at the end of the contract. Personal Contract Hire is made available by ALD Automotive Ltd, trading as Hyundai Personal Contract Hire, BS16 3JA. Terms and conditions apply. Guarantees/Indemnities may be required. Applicants must be 18 or over. When the vehicle is returned it must be in good condition and not have exceeded the agreed mileage otherwise further charges will be incurred. Model and colour are subject to availability. If you choose this personal contract hire offer, you will not own the car. All offers, finance and savings are subject to availability and are only available to private retail customers on new cars purchased and registered in the UK (excluding Channel Islands or Isle of Man), between 1st July and 30th September 2013, inclusive, sourced through Hyundai Motor UK Ltd or its authorised dealers. Offers are not available for customers under the Hyundai Affinity Programme. 5 Year Triple Care terms and conditions apply. Please see www.hyundai.co.uk or ask your local Dealer. Fuel consumption: figures shown are based on official EU test figures. These are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results.

Fuel consumption MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai range: Urban 25.2 (11.2) – 78.5 (3.6), Extra Urban 38.7 (7.3) – 94.2 (3.0), Combined 32.1 (8.8) – 88.3 (3.2), CO_2 Emissions 231 – 84 g/km.

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Fuel consumption for the Honda car range in mpg (l/100km): Urban Cycle 23.2 – 70.6 (12.2 – 4.0), Extra Urban 40.4 – 85.6 (7.0 – 3.3), Combined 32.5 – 78.5 (8.7 – 3.6). CO_2 emissions 201 – 94g/km.
Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.
Models shown for illustrative purposes: Jazz 1.4 i-VTEC Si Manual in optional White Orchid Pearl, Civic 1.8 i-VTEC EX GT Manual in Milano Red with optional 18-inch Krypton alloy wheels and CR-V 2.2 i-DTEC EX in optional Crystal Black Pearl.

Models shown are Yaris Edition 1.0 VVT-i 3 door manual £11,995. AYGO Mode 1.0 VVTi 3 door £9,945. Offer excludes metallic paint extra £450 on AYGO, £495 on Yaris. Prices correct at time of going to press. †0% APR Representative only available on new retail sales of Yaris (excluding T2), AYGO Move and AYGO Mode when ordered between 1 July and 30 September 2013 and registered and financed through Toyota Financial Services, Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5UZ before 31 December 2013 on a 3 year AccessToyota (PCP) plan with 0-29% deposit. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s. Excess mileage over 30,000 charged at 8p per mile on AYGO and Yaris. Toyota Centres are independent of Toyota Financial Services. Terms and Conditions apply. ‡1 year's free comprehensive insurance offer is subject to purchase being made via Toyota Financial Services on a Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) only and is available on all new Yaris, AYGO Move and AYGO Mode models when ordered and financed between 1 July and 30 September 2013. Vehicles must be registered by 31 December 2013. All drivers must be aged 21 years and over. Offer is limited to the insured plus up to four additional drivers. The insured and all drivers must have held a full UK driving licence for a minimum of 2 years and had no more than 1 fault claim in the last 3 years. Offer only available to customers with no more than 1 minor motoring conviction in the last 3 years. Standard Toyota Motor Insurance Terms & Conditions apply (available on request) - these will be confirmed in the policy document. Affordable finance through AccessToyota. 5 year/100,000 mile manufacturer warranty subject to terms and conditions.

Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km); Yaris Range: Urban 41.5 (6.8) -91.1 (3.1), Extra Urban 60.1 (4.7) - 80.7 (3.5), Combined 51.4 (5.5) - 80.7 (3.5). CO_2 Emissions 127g/km - 79g/km. AYGO Range: Urban 52.3 (5.4) - 55.4 (5.1), Extra Urban 70.6 (4.0) - 74.3 (3.8), Combined 62.7 (4.5) - 65.7 (4.3). CO_2 Emissions 104g/km - 99g/km. The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results. These are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

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CHOICES: From left: the good looking five- or seven-seat Kia Carens MPV is a new option. While Vauxhall's Zafira Tourer has flex appeal, Toyota's seven-seat Verso is definitely versatile

Alternative motoring

SUPERMINIS rule the UK motor market, but they cannot conquer the hearts and minds of people who need family or major load space.

These are the buyers who have made MPVs (multipurpose vehicles), SUVs (sports utility vehicles) and crossovers into powerful sectors of the overall market.

French brand-mate Peugeot has created a whole new sub-range by adding a double-oh series of versatile models, begun by the 3008 crossover, but joined more recently by the luxurious 5008 MPV and, a few weeks ago, the 2008 junior crossover.

Korean sister brands Kia and Hyundai also leapt into contention in this sector with their Sportage and ix35 SUV cum crossover models respectively, with Kia also adding its classy new-generation Carens MPV earlier this year.

But Renault started the MPV thing and its Scenic is one of the best-known models, available with five or seven seats and now also including the rugged XMOD variant with special traction control on its front wheels.

Another comprehensive MPV brand is Vauxhall. Its line-up starts with the supermini-size Agila and steps up to the Meriva, which has rearward-opening back doors for easy access. Then come the Zafira sisters, the original being joined by the even roomier and more upmarket Zafira Tourer – but both have the brand's trademark fold-flat Flex7 rear seats.

One of the Vauxhall's fiercest rivals is the Verso from Toyota. The new-generation car is sharply styled for such a space-efficient car.

When choosing your MPV, look for versatility by checking: if the rear seats are easy to move and fold individually; whether they fold flat for a clear load space; and also whether the two rearmost seats in a seven-seater model are easy to access.

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Mercedes-Benz

Official government fuel consumption figures in mpg (litres per 100km) for the Mercedes-Benz range: urban 13.0(21.7)-68.9(4.1), extra urban 23.9(11.8)-85.6(3.3), combined 19.8(14.3)-74.3(3.8). CO2 emissions 334-98 g/km.

Models featured are a Mercedes-Benz new E 220 CDI SE Coupé with manual transmission at £37,110.00 on-the-road including optional metallic paint at £645.00 and panoramic sunroof at £1,370.00, a Mercedes-Benz new CLA 180 AMG Sport with manual transmission at £26,555.00 on-the-road, and a Mercedes-Benz A 180 Sport with manual transmission at £21,490.00 on-the-road.

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Before buying your new car...

- **Don't** accept the first deal on offer – be ready to haggle.
- **Don't** be afraid to ask for trimmings like a tank of fuel, car mats or further discounts or extras.
- **Don't** fall for what seems like a big bargain before you even haggle. It could be an unpopular engine or trim combination or a car on 'run-out' where production ceased a while ago – it might be just as thirsty as your old car and will depreciate badly.
- **Do** pick a model that saves fuel, insurance, road tax and depreciation – it isn't getting any easier out there.
- **Don't** be blinded by road-tax-exempt but expensive eco models, though. Check price, running costs, green credentials and the savings over your planned mileage versus years of ownership, then compare against the closest standard version. The overall savings on the standard car may surprise you.
- **Don't** assume that diesel will save – you usually pay more upfront so you need to cover more miles to claw that money back in fuel economy, and the engines are generally heavier, which means more wear on front tyres and mechanicals. The fuel is also dearer at the pumps, while economy and emissions on small petrol cars have improved and they are often nicer to drive. In short – do your sums.

CHOOSE YOUR MODEL: Whether it is a Mercedes A-Class, the new-generation Toyota Auris or the elegant Hyundai i40, check that you're getting the best version for your needs and pocket

SIMPLY CLEVER

ŠKODA

Three big reasons to buy a new reg ŠKODA at Sherlodge Garage

63 REG

From £69 PER MONTH*

0% APR† representative

with up to 3 YEARS' FREE SERVICING**

63 REG

0% APR offer applies to the whole **63-reg** ŠKODA range‡

†**0% APR representative Solutions offer** available on selected new ŠKODA models with deposits from 0–30%, subject to underwriting. *£69 example based on Citigo Hatch 1.0 MPI SE 3dr, Cash price £8,780: 36-month Solutions agreement, 10,000 miles per annum and with a customer deposit of £2,426.28, 35 monthly payments of £69, followed by an optional final purchase payment of £3,938.72 – total amount to be financed £6,353.72. Deposit shown may be higher than the minimum; a lower deposit will result in increased monthly payments. Further charges may be payable if vehicle is returned. Excess mileage charged at 4.4p per mile. For finance, terms and conditions apply. Indemnities may be required. Subject to status. Over 18s in mainland UK only. Excludes Channel Islands. ŠKODA Finance, Freepost, ŠKODA Finance. We can introduce you to a limited number of lenders to assist with your purchase, who may pay us for introducing you to them. Prices and specifications are accurate at time of print. Offers may be varied or withdrawn at any time and are not available in conjunction with any other offer. Retail sales only. Subject to availability on orders placed before 30 September 2013. **Free servicing up to 3 years or 30,000 miles (whichever comes first) when purchased with ŠKODA Solutions. ‡Model exclusions apply. Models shown vary from UK specification.

Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA range: Urban 19.2 (14.7) to 68.9 (4.1), Extra Urban 36.2 (7.8) to 94.2 (3.0), Combined 27.7 (10.2) to 83.1 (3.4). CO_2 emissions for the ŠKODA range 237 to 89g/km. Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

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Wigmore, Gillingham
Kent
ME8 0SW
0843 320 1667
www.kentskoda.co.uk

NEW REG '63

More cars available @drive24.co.uk motors.co.uk Powered by

SILVER, RED AND YELLOW: Clockwise from top left: this Lexus IS wears the UK's number three colour, while number two in the charts is modelled by a Honda Jazz. Finally, yellow is risky but it does look pretty good on the latest Renault Clio!

Colour does matter

ACCORDING to AA research, only 1 per cent of men and 3 per cent of women think that colour is important when choosing a new car.

But hard-nosed second-hand-buyers are fussier about what they spend their cash on, especially if they have to live with the car's colour for longer than the three years of the typical first owner.

So think again, because a wild colour can have a detrimental effect on what your 63-Reg motor is worth when you sell it, while metallic shades can add value.

The difference could be worth thousands on an upmarket or sports model and that may be why many of us choose to play safe.

The AA says six out of 10 new cars are blue, red or silver and only one in 10 of us choose green or white, while only one in a hundred choose yellow, turquoise or pink.

However, if you shop for the common colours you will find most carmakers offer a range of shades in both flat and metallic finishes and you'll probably have the car delivered sooner, too – another big factor when choosing colour.

Another thing to consider is how darker colours often show dirt as badly as white and may indeed highlight light scratches caused by car-washes.

White has shot back up the rankings because it reflects the heat and is usually a no-cost option, though you may pay more for it with premium models.

The AA's top 10 colours in descending order are: blue, red, silver, green, white, black, grey, gold, mauve and yellow.

But don't steer away from brighter colours if it's right for the car: sporting cars often look best in bright colours.

PEUGEOT *208* ACTIVE

Peugeot's iconic '20' series has been regenerated with the award-winning Peugeot 208, featuring **multi-function touchscreen, air conditioning, cruise control, Bluetooth with USB connectivity and a EURO NCAP 5* safety rating**. Now you can Drive Away Happy with the Peugeot 208 on our unique Just Add Fuel® plan. So call today, book a test drive and experience the superb Peugeot 208 for yourself.

MOTION & EMOTION

PEUGEOT

ROBINS & DAY MAIDSTONE
Mill Street, MAIDSTONE, ME15 6YD Tel: 01622 753 333
www.robinsandday-maidstone.co.uk

ROBINS & DAY ROCHESTER
209 High Street, ROCHESTER, ME1 1HF Tel: 01634 842 231
www.robinsandday-rochester.co.uk

The official fuel consumption in mpg (l/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km) for the 208 range are: Urban 34.9 – 78.4 (8.1 – 3.6), Extra Urban 62.8 – 88.2 (4.5 – 3.2), Combined 48.7 – 83.0 (5.8 – 3.4) and CO_2 135 – 87. MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions.
#Terms and conditions apply, participating dealers only or visit www.peugeot.co.uk. To finance your [lease/purchase] we may introduce you to a limited number of lenders.
*The first year Road Fund Licence (RFL) is included in the on the road price. The Dealer will provide customers with a cheque equivalent to twice the current RFL cost. The customer must apply for years 2 & 3 RFL.
Just Add Fuel (JAF) is subject to status. 'Minimum age 21, 25 or 30 on selected models, maximum age 75. Policyholder must have a minimum of 2 years NCD to use on the vehicle. All drivers must meet eligibility criteria including minimum 2 years' full UK licence, driving convictions/claims limits. Excesses apply. 3 years motor insurance is provided and underwritten by U K Insurance Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. A guarantee may be required. Written quotations available from Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA. JAF is incorporated into a Personal Lease contract. 208 Active 1.0 VTi 68 3dr initial rental £1,806, optional final rental £5,358, 35 monthly rentals. If you choose to pay off the optional final rental, you can pay an annual rental equivalent to one of your monthly rentals but will not own the car. Ownership is possible with JAF Passport, ask your Dealer for details. Rentals quoted for a typical customer and will vary according to age, post code and annual mileage. Excess mileage charges may apply. Routine servicing included only. Excludes wear parts. This offer is not available in NI. Offer available on cars ordered and registered by 30th September 2013. Calls may be recorded for training purposes.

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ACH
Care & Support for Adults with Learning Disabilities

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

We are a leading provider of residential care homes in the South and East of England offering person-centred support to adults with learning disabilities.
To help us to continue to offer and develop high quality person led services we now require in Hythe:

Support Worker from £13,400 p.a.

For more than a decade we have provided high quality care and support to enable adults with conditions including:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Challenging Behaviour
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- Multiple disabilities, including sensory impairments

Our goal is to enable each person we work with to lead a full, enjoyable and active life – in the way that best suits their needs and wishes – in their home and the community.

ACH's care homes provide safe, supportive, high quality environments where residents can grow in confidence and develop the daily living and decision-making skills they need.

For an application pack please visit our website at www.achuk.com alternatively email your cv to joan.williams@achuk.com or contact Joan on 020 8502 8841.

Senior Care Assistant

required to join our team in a residential home in Faversham. Will be working on a rota basis. Must be organised, efficient, forward thinking and a good delegator. Excellent communication skills required. Duties include, supporting home manager, handling medication, planning all aspects of residents care, record keeping and taking full responsibility for shifts. NVQ3 or working towards would be an advantage.

For further details
tel: 01795 532629
between 10am and 4pm

University of Kent

Administration Manager

Ref: OTR0708
Grade 8: £37,382 - £44,607 pa pro rata

The University of Kent are currently seeking an experienced, strategic and innovative Administration Manager for a position in our Information Services Department.

Closing date: Monday 9 September 2013

For further information please visit
www.kent.ac.uk/jobs

Abbey Court School

"We grow people"

Abbey Court School provides a stimulating, challenging and safe learning environment where pupils and staff efforts, work and achievement are celebrated.

We are currently looking for a....

part time Physiotherapists

to join and enhance our high calibre team
Medway Scale B2 to A – point 32 to 46 (£27,052 to £38,961)
(term time only - pro rata)

Abbey Court School is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Nursery and Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties. We are looking for enthusiastic and experienced Physiotherapists, with a professional and flexible approach. Applicants should have an interest in working in an educational setting which commits to enabling pupils to reach their full potential. The postholders will be offered the opportunity to express their creativity, work holistically and demonstrate their strengths whilst undertaking a wide variety of tasks.

Working hours are 18.5 hours p/w, term time only. The successful candidates will work as part of a larger therapy team, alongside Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Music and Art Therapists. Candidates should hold a relevant Physiotherapy qualification. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development. Visits to the school are welcomed. Salary is negotiable between top and bottom scales.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing Date: 13th September 2013

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Business Manager, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

Please note CVs will not be accepted.

Jobseekers are finding it even easier to find their next local job thanks to a range of improvements to leading local jobs website

jobs24.co.uk

Users of the site can benefit from significant improvements to the layout, search functions and features of the website, which currently lists over 25,000 local job vacancies.

New search tools provide users with more control over their job search and ensure discovering and sharing the most relevant jobs is faster and more convenient. The design of the site has been improved making it even more user-friendly, with an easy to navigate homepage, clearer search result pages and standout Featured and Hot Jobs. Extra icons on search listings also help registered jobseekers easily spot new jobs since their last visit and previously applied for vacancies.

Further changes to the site include advanced CV Match emails and job alert emails, which enable users to receive even more relevant jobs sent straight to their inbox, and a new Help section offering jobseekers instructions and support on everything from how to set up a CV Match email to how to apply for a job.

The improvements to jobs24 extend to its mobile site (www.jobs24.co.uk/mobile) which allows users to make the most of the new search system and keep informed of new vacancies while on the move.

Even more benefits of the new jobs24.co.uk website are available to registered users via the MyJobs24 section, where they can:

- Save searches and recap search history to make it easier to find suitable jobs;
- Receive improved job alert emails sent straight to their inbox as soon as a relevant vacancy is added;
- Use the advanced CV Match service to upload and edit their CV, ensuring automatic Match emails featuring the most relevant jobs and employers;
- Compile a video CV for a unique way of standing out to local employers.

Commercial Director Fraser Chapman said
"Having listened to our customers and jobseekers we wanted to implement a new functionality and design to make it easier for employers to communicate with audiences and for jobseekers to find their perfect role. We have exciting developments planned for jobs24 over the next year and will continue to ensure jobs24 remains the ideal place for jobseekers to find the best local jobs".

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To place your notice here call the Kent Public Notice team on
01303 817056

Edenbridge Community Warden (Part Time)

Salary: £10,532 per annum eligible for final salary pension

Location: Edenbridge

Responsible to: Deputy Town Clerk

Edenbridge seeks a person keen to improve the local environment, provide a link between residents, agencies, and voluntary organisations, and promote community safety. This role is 3 days a week (22 hours) contract initially until October 2015. It requires initiative and working as part of a small team; flexibility to cover some evening/ weekend work; ability to keep records; a clean driving licence and being subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

For further information and application form call 01732 865368
or e-mail kathy@edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk
Edenbridge Town Council, Doggetts Barn, 72A High St, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5AR
Closing date 12 noon 16 September 2013.

Career opportunities at MidKent College

Reference: P058

Title:
Exams Manager
(Maternity Cover)

Location: Medway Campus

Closing: 10/09/2013

Role: As one of the county's largest education and training providers, MidKent College of Higher and Further Education has state-of-the-art campuses in Medway and Maidstone. We are looking for an committed, energetic, enthusiastic and forward-thinking individual to manage a busy and fast paced Examinations Office.

You should have excellent organisational skills, flexibility, diplomacy, strong IT skills, a focus on the customer, the ability to work fast and accurately under pressure and be willing to work out of normal office hours.

You should have;

Previous line management experience

Exams sector experience including knowledge awarding body regulations and ideally hold relevant qualifications

Ability to travel and work across sites

Knowledge of data protection, safeguarding and equality & diversity.

To apply for this vacancy please contact
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

MidKent College

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10th September 2013

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Notice of intended land disposal Local government act 1972 Section 123 (2A)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council intends to dispose of the freehold interest in one area of land, which is for identification purposes described in the schedule to this notice.

This notice is given in so far as the area of land consists of or forms part of an open space within the meaning of the above section.

A plan of the land is available to view at the Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2AB or at the Weald Information Centre, The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook TN17 3HF.

Objections to the proposed disposal must be made in writing to the Legal Services Manager, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS by no later than 6 September 2013

SCHEDULE

Land at the rear of 46-58 Liptraps Lane, High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 3AA (approximately 0.168 hectares)

Paul Cummins, Legal Services Manager
Dated 15th August 2013

PUBLIC NOTICE

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL AS LOCAL AUTHORITY

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT, 1984

(ZEBRA CROSSING - ALPHA ROAD, BIRCHINGTON)

Notice is hereby given that Kent County Council, as local traffic authority, and after consultation with the chief officer of police, propose to establish a crossing (Zebra) for pedestrians under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all their enabling powers, as follows:

ALPHA ROAD, BIRCHINGTON - Outside the Birchington library

Dated 01 September 2013

Traffic Schemes and Member Highway Fund Manager

Kent County Council Highways

Full details of the proposal, together with the relevant plans, and any other information may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Kent Highways and Transportation, Javelin Way

Ashford, TN24 8AD, between 8.30am and 5.00pm.
If you wish to object, or support the proposed scheme, please contact Kent Highways by Monday 30th September.
Scheme ref: 13-MHF-TH-06

Kent County Council kent.gov.uk

barnard marcus

Auction Sale
10th September 2013

By order of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Land at Liptraps Lane/Wiltshire Way, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 3AA

- Parcel of land of approximately 0.4 acres
- Guide price: £20,000+

Please call 0208 741 8088
www.barnardmarcusauctions.co.uk

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LandSecurities

EXCITING PLANS FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF NEWNHAM COURT SHOPPING VILLAGE GO ON SHOW

– a new lifestyle & outdoor retail destination for Maidstone

Land Securities plc are preparing plans for the redevelopment of Newnham Court Shopping Village. New tenants would include Waitrose while Notcutts Garden Centre will be relocated within the site.

Before an application is made to Maidstone Borough Council a Public Consultation on the proposed plans is taking place. **Residents are invited to come and see the plans and meet members of the development team.**

Where?: **Newnham Court Shopping Village (find us between Fineline and Hammonds)**

When?: **Friday 6th September 10.00am – 6.00pm**
Saturday 7th September 10.00am – 3.00pm

Please come along and have your say. **All welcome!**

BE PART OF YOUR COMMUNITY Advertise here Call 01303 817056 wwww.kentnews.co.uk

HIGHWAYS

HIGHWAYS – ASHFORD AREA

STATION ROAD, CHARING (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To allow the use of a mobile crane as part of works to install a replacement footbridge, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Station Road, Charing.

Station Road, Charing will be closed in the vicinity of Charing Station.

The closure is planned to commence from Saturday 21 September at 20:00 hours through until Monday 23 September at 06:00 hours.

If weather or other factors prevent works going ahead on the above dates, they will be deferred until the following weekend, Saturday 28 September from 20:00 hours through until Monday 30 September at 06:00 hours.

The alternative route is via A20 Maidstone Road, Hook Lane, Charing Heath Road, Pluckley Road and Station Road.

WYE LEVEL CROSSING, WYE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER SEPTEMBER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of level crossing maintenance and improvement works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Wye Level Crossing, Wye, as defined below.

Bridge Street will be closed in the vicinity of the Level Crossing, with no direct access between the A28 and Wye.

Closures are planned as follows

Sunday 8 September 2013 at 00:05 hours through until Monday 9 September at 04:00 hours

Sunday 6 October 2013 at 00:05 hours through until Monday 7 October at 04:00 hours

The alternative route is via Bridge Street, Churchfield Way, High Street, Upper Bridge Street, Oxenturn Road, Naccolt Road, Hinxhill Road, The Street (Willesborough), A2070 Kennington Road & Willesborough Road, A28 Canterbury Road and Harville Road.

HIGHWAYS – DARTFORD AREA

CLEMENT STREET (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of essential electrical ground work to be carried out by UK Power Networks, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Clement Street,Swanley on or after 2nd September 2013 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed outside number 2 Sutton Cottages, Clements Street.

There will be no access for through traffic at this location.

The alternative route is via Goss Hill, B258,Shirehall Road, A225,Arnolds Lane and Clements Street.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

(VARIOUS ROADS, THE BOROUGH OF DARTFORD) (20MPH, 30MPH, 40MPH, 50MPH SPEED LIMITS AND DERESTRICTED ROADS) AMENDMENT NO. 1 ORDER 2013

NOTICE is hereby given that the Kent County Council, in exercise of its powers under Sections 1 and 2 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, has made an Order to:-

Install a 50mph speed limit on Green Street Green Road / Trolling Down Hill from a point 93m south east of the centre of the junction with Orbital One to a point 75m north west of the roundabout junction with Gore Road.

Full details are contained in the has made Order which, together with the relevant plan, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined during normal office hours Mondays to Fridays at Kent County Council, Sessions House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX and at Ashford Highway Depot, Henwood Industrial Estate, 4 Javelin Way, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8AD

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to Paul Thrower, Kent County Council Highways, Javelin Way, Ashford, TN24 8AD or by email to TRO@kent.gov.uk, quoting the title of the Order by noon on 20th September 2013.

HIGHWAYS – DOVER AREA

ALLENBY AVENUE, DEAL (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of footway and carriageway repairs and resurfacing, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on Allenby Avenue, Deal.

Allenby Avenue, Deal will be closed for its entire length.

The closure is planned to commence from 2 September 2013 for up to 8 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed weekdays only, and due to the nature of the works being carried out, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside working times. The road will be re-opened at weekends.

The alternative route is via Mill Road and Park Avenue.

LENACRE LANE, WHITFIELD (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To enable tree safety works to be carried out, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Lenacre Lane, Whitfield.

Lenacre Lane will be closed in the vicinity of the junction with Lenacre Avenue.

The closure is planned to commence from 17 September 2013 for up to 2 days, between 09:30 hours and 15:30 hours each day.

The alternative route is via Nursery Lane, Sandwich Road, Forge Lane and Lenacre Lane.

MEGGETT LANE, ALKHAM, DOVER (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To allow maintenance works to be carried out to a culvert, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Meggett Lane, Alkham, Dover.

Meggett Lane will be closed in the vicinity of the culvert over the stream, with access from either direction up to the point of closure, but no through access.

The closure is planned to commence from Monday 2 September 2013 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The alternative route is via Alkham Valley Road and Hogbrook Hill Lane.

HIGHWAYS – MAIDSTONE AREA

CHURCH STREET, TESTON (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of gas mains replacement works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Church Street, Teston, on or after 2 September 2013 for up to 4 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed from A26 Tonbridge Road to The Street.

The alternative route is via A26 Tonbridge Road and The Street.

SMITH'S HILL, WEST FARLEIGH/YALDING (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of overhead cabling works for BT Openreach, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Smith's Hill, West Farleigh/Yalding, on or after 2 September 2013 for up to 3 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed from Hunt Street to Shingle Barn Road.

The alternative route is via Ewell Lane, B2163 Upper Hunton Hill, Hunton Hill, West Street, Vicarage Road, Kenward Road, Yalding Hill.

WALLIS AVENUE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because it is necessary to demolish and rebuild buildings, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on the access roads between Brishing Lane and Hollingworth Road on Wallis Avenue, on or after 16 September 2013 for up to 18 months or until the works have been completed. The main carriageway of Wallis Avenue is not affected.

WEST STREET & STATION ROAD, HARRIETSHAM (PROHIBITION OF PARKING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of it is necessary to install a new footbridge at the train station, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting parking on West Street on the left lane from A20 Ashford Road to Forge Meadow and on all of Station Road, Harrietsham, on or after 21 September 2013 for up to 2 nights between 18.00hrs and 06.00hrs or until the works have been completed.

HIGHWAYS – SEVENOAKS AREA

HOW GREEN LANE, HEVER, SEVENOAKS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of carriageway patching works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on How Green Lane, Hever, Sevenoaks, on or after 2nd September 2013 for up to 3 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed at the junction with Hever Road to Clinton Lane and there will be no access for through traffic at this location.

The alternative route is via: approaching from the south, the diversion route is east along Hever Road then North along B2027 Chequers Hill, East along B2027 Clinton Lane and north along B2027 Clinton Lane Approaching from the East the diversion is the same but in reverse.

PILGRIMS WAY WEST, OTFORD (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of detailed railway bridge examination works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Pilgrims Way West, Otford on or after 16th September 2013 for up to 2 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed at the bridge and there will be no access for through traffic at this location.

The alternative route is via: Pilgrims Way West, London Road, A224 London Road Dunton Green and Riverhead, A25 Bradbourne Vale Road, A225 Otford Road, High Street Otford and vice versa.

HIGHWAYS – SHEPWAY AREA

A20 BARROW HILL, SELLINDGE (30 MPH SPEED LIMIT) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

For the safety of the public and workforce during carriageway repair works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to impose a temporary mandatory speed limit of 30 mph on part of A20 Barrow Hill, Sellindge.

This affects the northbound carriageway of Barrow Hill, from the junction with Otterpool Lane northwards for a distance of up to 200 metres.

This applies during carriageway repairs that are planned to be carried out from 18 September 2013 for up to 2 evenings, between 19:00 hours until 23:00 hours each evening.

The restrictions will be in place when the relevant 30 mph Speed Limit signage is displayed on site.

A259 DYMCHURCH ROAD, HYTHE (30 MPH SPEED LIMIT) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

For the safety of the public and workforce during mobile carriageway repair works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to impose a temporary mandatory speed limit of 30 mph on part of A259 Dymchurch Road, Hythe.

This applies during carriageway repairs that are planned to be carried out from 16 September 2013 for up to 2 evenings, between 19:00 hours until 23:00 hours each evening.

This affects the both carriageways of A259 Dymchurch Road, Hythe, between the junctions with Palmarsh Avenue and Martello Drive, as and when the relevant 30 mph Speed Limit signs are displayed on site.

RECTORY LANE, BROOKLAND (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains replacement works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Rectory Lane, Brookland.

Rectory Lane will be closed to through traffic to the south of Parish Farm.

The closure is planned to commence from 19 September 2013 for up to 9 weeks.

Due to the nature of these works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours.

The alternative route is via King Street, Carter Lane and Oldhouse Lane.

VARIOUS ROADS, FOLKESTONE & SWINGFIELD (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of carriageway repairs and resurfacing, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on certain roads in Folkestone and Swingfield.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below.

Roads will be closed between 09:00 hours and 16:30 hours each day, and otherwise re-opened.

HOLLOWAY LANE, SWINGFIELD will be closed from Monday 16 September 2013 for up to 2 days.

The closure is for its entire length (between the junctions with The Street and Little Everden Road)

The alternative route is via The Street, Swanton Lane, Canterbury Road, Warren Lane, Chalksole Green Lane and Little Everden Road

BOYINGTON LANE, SWINGFIELD will be closed from Wednesday 18 September 2013 for up to 2 days.

The road will be closed between both junctions with Oak Hill

The alternative route is via Oak Hill

ST MICHAEL'S STREET, FOLKESTONE will be closed on Wednesday 18 September 2013 for 1 day

The section to be closed is the one-way section from the junction with Dover Road to the remainder of St Michael's Street.

The alternative route is via Harvey Street, Margaret Street and St Michael's Street

HIGHWAYS – THANET AREA

BAIRDS HILL, BROADSTAIRS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To allow a detailed inspection of a railway bridge to be carried out, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Bairds Hill, Broadstairs.

Bairds Hill will be closed in the vicinity of the railway bridge.

The closure is planned for Tuesday 17th September from 22:00 hours through until 06:00 hours.

The alternative route is via B2053 Albion Road, Beacon Road, Grange Road and Callis Court Road.

CHAPEL PLACE LANE, RAMSGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of works to re-position a lighting column, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Chapel Place Lane, Ramsgate.

Chapel Place Lane will be closed in the vicinity of the junction with Chapel Place, with no through access.

The closure is planned to commence from 4 September 2013 for up to 1 day or until the works have been completed.

The alternative route is via Chapel Place.

DUNCAN ROAD, RAMSGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of repairs to a faulty sewer control valve, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Duncan Road, Ramsgate, as follows.

Duncan Road will be closed in the vicinity of the junction with Ellington Road, with access remaining from Crescent Road up to where the road is closed.

The closure is planned to commence from 2 September 2013 for up to 4 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The alternative routes are via Ellington Road, Codrington Road and Crescent Road or via Ellington Road, South Eastern Road and Crescent Road.

For further information, please contact Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, on 0300 333 5539 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

HIGHWAYS

A256 HENGIST WAY, RAMSGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To enable bridge remedial repairs and other maintenance to be carried out, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of A256 Hengist Way, Ramsgate.

Hengist Way will be closed between Sevenscore Roundabout and Lord of the Manor Roundabout, with only one carriageway closed at any one time.

The closures are planned as follows

WESTBOUND CARRIAGEWAY (away from Thanet) will be closed from Monday 2 September 2013 for up to 5 nights

The alternative route is via Canterbury Road West and A256 Hengist Way

EASTBOUND CARRIAGEWAY (towards Thanet) will be closed from Monday 9 September 2013 for up to 5 nights

The alternative route is via A256 Richborough Way and Sandwich Road

The closures will be between 19:00 hours through until 07:00 hours each night, with the road otherwise re-opened.

HIGH STREET, BROADSTAIRS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of carriageway repair works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of B2052 High Street, Broadstairs.

High Street will be closed between the junctions with Belvedere Road and Charlotte Street.

Closures are planned to commence from Wednesday 18 September 2013 for 2 evenings, between 19:00 hours and 23:00 hours each evening.

The alternative routes are

Northbound via Charlotte Street, B2052 York Street, Ramsgate Road and Queens Road

Southbound via Carlton Avenue, Lindenthorpe Road, Crow Hill, B2052 Nelson Place and Albion Street

HIGHWAYS – TONBRIDGE & MALLING

BARMING ROAD/NORTH POLE ROAD, WATERINGBURY/TESTON (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because it is necessary to install new telegraph poles and cabling for a new BT connection, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Barming Road/North Pole Road, Wateringbury/Teston, on or after 2 September 2013 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed from Wateringbury Road to outside Keeper's Cottage.

The alternative route is via Wateringbury Road, Red Hill, A26 Tonbridge Road, North Street.

HIGHWAYS – TUNBRIDGE WELLS AREA

BURNT HOUSE LANE, SPELDHURST (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2013

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because it is necessary to install a new water main, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Burnt House Lane, Speldhurst, on or after 16 September 2013 for up to 19 days or until the works have been completed.

The whole length of the road will be closed.

The alternative route is via Speldhurst Road, A264 Langton Road, Farnham Lane.

John Burr
Director of Highways & Transportation
Kent County Council
Invicta House
County Hall,
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ **Dated 1st September 2013**

For further information, please contact Kent County Council Highways and Transportation, on 0300 333 5539 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent County Council kent.gov.uk

PLANNING

Planning applications

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

Notice under Article 13 of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010
Notice under Article 8 of the Town & Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995
Notice under Section 67 and/or Section 73 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Notice under Regulation 5 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990
Notice under Regulation 5A of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the council:

CA//13/01536/LB: 3 Duck Lane, Canterbury, CT1 2AE Installation of a satellite dish. **Applicant: Mr J Bowman** Reason: Work to a listed building.
CA//13/01554/FUL: Canterbury Cathedral, The Precincts, Canterbury, CT1 2EH Installation of cast iron lamp post. **Applicant: Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral** Reason: Setting of listed building in conservation area.
CA//13/01555/LB: Canterbury Cathedral, The Precincts, Canterbury, CT1 2EH Installation of cast iron lamp post. **Applicant: Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral** Reason: Work to a listed building.
CA//13/01558/FUL: Flaxland Cottage, Garlinge Green Road, Garlinge Green, Petham, CT4 5RP Proposed first-floor extension to create additional bedroom and family bathroom. **Applicant: Mr Towse** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01559/FUL: Flint Cottage, Old Palace Road, Bekesbourne, CT4 5ES Single-storey garden room extension and removal of two outbuildings. **Applicant: Mrs Fairleigh** Reason: Setting of listed building in conservation area.
CA//13/01560/LB: Flint Cottage, Old Palace Road, Bekesbourne, CT4 5ES Single-storey garden room extension and removal of two outbuildings. **Applicant: Mrs Fairleigh** Reason: Work to a listed building.
CA//13/01574/FUL: 1 Rosemary Lane, Canterbury, CT1 2PN Replacement of timber gate and fence with metal gate and railings. **Applicant: Mr R Castle** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01583/CAC: 115 High Street, Herne Bay, CT6 5LA Demolition of extension to existing building in connection with conversion to two self-contained units with associated private amenity spaces. **Applicant: Mr Plews** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01584/LB: 1 Thatched Cottage, Highstead, Chislet, CT3 4LX Replacement windows, doors, glazing and roof to conservatory. **Applicant: Mrs M Fulcher** Reason: Setting of listed building in conservation area.
CA//13/01588/ADV: 1 New Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3AD Installation of freestanding externally illuminated gantry sign. **Applicant: Tesco Stores Limited** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01589/ADV: 1 New Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3AD Installation of internally illuminated fascia and internally illuminated projecting external signage **Applicant: Tesco Stores Limited** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01590/FUL: 1 New Dover Road, Canterbury Installation of ATM to the front elevation **Applicant: Tesco Stores Limited** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01591/FUL: 1 New Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3AD Alterations to the front elevation at ground floor. **Applicant: Tesco Stores Limited** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01608/FUL: 30 Stanley Road, Herne Bay, CT6 5SH Single-storey side extension. **Applicant: Mr and Mrs Ryan** Reason: Conservation area.
CA//13/01613/LB: The Swan Inn, High Street, Sturry, CT2 0BD Reinstatement of shutters. **Applicant: Augustus Moon Ltd** Reason: Work to a listed building.

Any representations should be sent in writing to the Head of Planning and Regeneration, Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury CT1 1YW or e-mailed to **development.management@canterbury.gov.uk** to arrive on or before **Monday 23 September 2013.**

The weekly list of applications can be viewed on our website at: **www.canterbury.gov.uk/dc**

Ian Brown, Head of Planning and Regeneration
Friday 30 August 2013

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING APPLICATIONS
LISTED BUILDING CONSENTS
CONSERVATION AREA CONSENTS

DOV/13/00701	Erection of a biomass combined heat and power plant with fuel storage and associated works **Site North East side of Discovery Park & Access, Ramsgate Road, Sandwich, CT13 9ND**	**MAJ**
DOV/13/00524	External alterations and installation of a hanging light **Witches Brew, 28 Church Street St Mary, Sandwich, CT13 9HL**	**LCN**
DOV/13/00655	Part change of use of upper floors to 3 flats, incorporating rear balconies and installation of shop front on ground floor (existing rear extension to be demolished) **43 Biggin Street, Dover, CT16 1DB**	**CON**
DOV/13/00672	Erection of 3 single storey Almshouses, construction of a vehicular access, visitor parking and associated landscaping **Site R/O Amy Temple Cottages, Chapel Lane, St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Dover, CT15 6BN**	**CAF**
DOV/13/00675	Erection of a single storey rear extension (existing conservatory to be demolished) **11 St Andrews Way, Tilmanstone, Deal, CT14 0JH**	**SLC**
DOV/13/00682	Erection of a detached garage (existing garage to be demolished) **Old Cottage, Loop Street, Sandwich, CT13 9HE**	**LCN**
DOV/13/00683	Internal alterations and demolition of garage **Old Cottage, Loop Street, Sandwich, CT13 9HE**	**LCN**
DOV/13/00420	Painting of exterior surfaces, replacement front door, replacement/renovation of existing ground floor shutters and installation of window shutters to first floor **7 North Street, Deal, CT14 6NA**	**SLC**
DOV/13/00640	Outline application for the erection of 4 detached dwellings and construction of a vehicular access **Land rear of 39 & 41, New Street, Ash, Sandwich, CT3 2BH**	**RCON**

Reason for Advert Codes:-
SLC - To affect the setting of a Listed Building & Conservation Area
ARW - Affects a Public Right of Way **CON -** Within Conservation Area
LCN - Listed Building in a Conservation Area **MAJ** - Major Development
CAF - The proposal affects a Conservation Area
RCON - Within a Conservation Area and affects a public right of way

Some applications are not publicised in this list. All applications may be inspected at the Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, to which address any representations (to include a postal address) should be sent **within 21 days** marked "for the attention of Planning". Applications may also be viewed, and comments on applications may be made on our website www.dover.gov.uk/planning or at Dover Gateway, 71 Castle Street, Dover, Deal Library or the Area Office, The Guildhall, Sandwich

Failure to meet the above deadline may jeopardise the chances of representations being considered. any representations received may be made available for inspection by the public, and may be copied to others, including the secretary of state and the applicant if there is an appeal against the council's decision. Representations will not be acknowledged until an application has been determined.

Please note that the Council does not accept any responsibility for any incomplete or inaccurate description of any application.

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Swale BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Swale Borough Council as Local Planning Authority has received the following applications which are being advertised to ascertain the views of persons living near the sites and other interested parties. The proposed developments relate to one or more of the following:

1. The site of the application is within/affecting a designated Conservation Area (Section 73) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. The proposed development may affect the Listed Building or it's setting.
3. The application is for a Major Development.
4. The application would affect a right of way to which Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) applies.
6. This application may be of wider public interest.

REPRESENTATIONS IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS MUST BE MADE BY 16 SEPTEMBER 2013.

SW/13/0360:
Addition of balcony to rear of property with steps from 1st floor to garden - 8 Goldings Wharf, Belvedere Road, FAVERSHAM; **REASONS 1 & 2**

SW/13/0689:
Change of Use from gymnasium to 1 no. bedsit, 4 no. 2 bedroom and 5 no. 1 bedroom flats (10 in total), 2nd floor rooftop addition, front, side and rear rooflights and alterations to the 1st floor windows to flats 5 & 7 within the front elevation. - 15-19 High Street, SITTINGBOURNE; **REASON 1,2 & 3**

SW/13/0989:
Change of use of land from vacant agricultural land to land for the stationing of caravans for residential occupation by single Gypsy-Traveller family with associated works (hard Standing, septic tank, shed) - Land at High Oak Hill, Iwade Road, NEWINGTON; **REASON 1,2,4 & 6**

SW/13/1003:
Replace existing front windows with double glazed sash, replacement front door and front door to be recessed. Replace cellar hatch and window like for like and replacement of bathroom, kitchen and rear bedroom windows and replacement back door. - 25 Briton Road, FAVERSHAM; **REASON 1**

SW/13/1011:
Advertisement Consent for 1 no. Non-illuminated heritage projecting sign, 1 no. Non-illuminated brandmark on existing fascia painted blue, 1 no. Non-illuminated reduced width ATM collar - Halifax PLC, 71 High Street, SHEERNESS; **REASON 1, 2 & 4**

SW/13/1022:
Proposed single storey side and rear extension and car port to the side of the property - Roundhay, Callaways Lane, NEWINGTON; **REASON 1**

Particulars of the proposal(s) can be obtained from Planning Services, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, where copies of the applications and all documents submitted with them may be inspected during office hours; any representations should be made in writing to this address.

James Freeman
Head of Planning

To advertise in this section
01303 817056

Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

13/02346/FUL **The Barracks Wilsley Green, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst**
- Conversion of main dwelling to 3 self contained apartments, the squash court to 3 self contained apartments, the oast building to 1 self contained apartment, reinstatement of barn to form 1 bed apartment, new garden wall, garages and car parking (LB) (CA)

13/02347/LBC **The Barracks Wilsley Green, Cranbrook And Sissinghurst**
- Conversion of main dwelling to 3 self contained apartments, the squash court to 3 self contained apartments, the oast building to 1 self contained apartment, reinstatement of barn to form 1 bed apartment, new garden wall, garages and car parking (LB)

13/02396/FULMJ **9 Park Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden**
- Extension of time - New B1 (office/light industry/research) development including alterations to existing warehouse and demolition of two 1/2 storey warehouse (TW/10/02084 refers) (MAJOR)

13/02386/FUL **Taywell Farm Shop Cranbrook Road, Goudhurst**
- Change of use from farm shop to shooting lodge (LB)

13/02391/FUL **Land At The Junction Of Post Office Road And Northgrove Road, Hawkhurst**
- Construction of a pair of semi-detached dwellings (CA)

13/02202/FUL **Caffe Nero 12 - 14 High Street, Pantiles & St Marks**
- Install 2 No AC condenser units to rear elevation (works already completed) (LB)(CA)

13/02375/HOUSE **1 Hargate Close Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks**
- Variation of condition 4 and 5 of TW/12/03008 to ensure that the existing bathroom and bedroom window openings would remian in situ. TW/12/03008 permitted a two storey rear extension (including two dormers to the east elevation), a single storey side extension and the replacement of clear glazing with obscure glazing at the existing first floor bedroom window at the south side elevation (CA)

13/02364/FUL **Garden Cottage 16 Calverley Park Gardens, Park**
- Minor Material Amendment to planning permission TW/13/01417 - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new dwelling by variation of Condition 2 (plans) of that permission (CA)

13/02380/FUL **Park View Pembury Road, Park**
- Minor Material Amendment in relation to TW/12/01576 to amend design of dwelling (CA)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

James Freeman
Head of Planning Services,
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 31 August 2013

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

PLANNING

THE MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Town and Country Planning Act
Notice of Applications

MA/13/0989/N - 52-54, LOWER STONE STREET, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME15 6NA - Change of use of first and second floors to 1no 4 bedroomed flat, installation of external staircase and alterations to fenestration. **Reason: 1,2**

MA/13/0990/N - 52-54, LOWER STONE STREET, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME15 6NA - Listed building consent for the relocation and replacement of windows, relocation and replacement of door to side elevation and installation of external staircase and internal alterations. **Reason: 2,3**

MA/13/1030/S - LAND KNOWN AS LITTLE SPITZBROOK FARMYARD, HAVIKER STREET, COLLIER STREET, TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN12 9RG - Erection of a non-permanent polytunnel. **Reason: 1**

MA/13/1348/N - STREET FARM, THE STREET, BOXLEY, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME14 3DR - Demolition of redundant cattle shed and other structures and conversion of traditional courtyard buildings to provide 2 no. dwellings with access, parking and landscaping. **Reason: 1,2**

MA/13/1435/N - PILGRIMS RETREAT, HOGBARN LANE, HARRIETSHAM, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 1NZ - Application to vary condition 4 of MA/96/1132 to allow an expansion of the area used for siting static caravans and operational development to alter land levels (partly retrospective and resubmission of MA/13/0724). **Reason: 6**

MA/13/1438/N - FAIRBOURNE MANOR, FAIRBOURNE LANE, HARRIETSHAM, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 1LN - Retrospective application for retention of north porch. **Reason: 3**

MA/13/1439/N - FAIRBOURNE MANOR, FAIRBOURNE LANE, HARRIETSHAM, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 1LN - Part retrospective application for remedial works to allow retention of east porch. **Reason: 3**

MA/13/1443/N - THE OLD COTTAGE, UPPER STREET, HOLLINGBOURNE, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 1UJ - Retrospective listed building consent for replacement of flooring at ground floor level. **Reason: 3**

MA/13/1455/N - THE OLD COTTAGE, UPPER STREET, HOLLINGBOURNE, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 1UJ - Retrospective listed building application for the conversion of a double aspect first floor bedroom to 2 no. smaller bedrooms. **Reason: 3**

Reasons for advertisement key:

1 - Applications affects the setting of a Listed Building.
2 - Application affects the setting of a Conservation Area.
3 - Application is for Listed Building Consent.
6 - Application is Major Development.

Copies of applications listed may be seen at Maidstone Gateway, Maidstone during office hours (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, and Saturday 9am to 1pm). Any representations should be made in writing to me by no later than **15th September 2013**, quoting the application number.

Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ. **Dated**: 1st September 2013.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010

NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13

Proposed development at Land Off Honeywood Parkway, White Cliffs Business Park, Whitfield, CT16 3PT

The proposed development does not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area of land to which the application relates.

I give notice that Location 3 Properties Ltd are/is applying to the Dover District Council for planning permission for:

Section 73 application for the erection of non-food retail warehouse units, one restaurant unit, construction of vehicular access, together with associated highway works, parking and landscaping with variation to condition 2 to allow changes to the footprint, appearance and car park

The proposal is a Major Development

The proposal is a departure from the Development Plan

Members of the public may inspect copies of the application, plans and any other submitted documents via the Council's website at **www.dover.gov.uk/planning** or at:-

Dover District Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday until 20/09/2013

Anyone who wishes to make representations about this application should write to Planning, Dover District Council, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ quoting reference number **DOV/13/00688** by 13/09/2013.

The Council will not normally enter into correspondence with the public on applications. **There will be no response until the application has been determined.**

Failure to meet this deadline may jeopardise the chances of representations being considered.

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y13/0798/SH# - The Guildhall 13 High Street Lydd Romney Marsh Kent - Listed building consent for the installation of a CCTV camera to front (North) elevation.

Y13/0878/SH+ - Tin Tabernacle Portland Road Hythe Kent CT21 6FL - Change of use of hall to a mixed use with office use (Class B1a and Class D1) - variation of conditions 2 and 4 of planning permission Y12/0721/SH to allow the omission of the internal mezzanine area

Y13/0882/SH - 21 Clifton Crescent Folkestone Kent CT20 2EN - Listed building consent for the replacement of the existing sash window with French doors in the same width opening through the removal of masonry beneath the window cill

Y13/0880/SH - Grove House Canterbury Road Etchinghill Folkestone Kent - Crown reduction of an Ash tree situated within a conservation area

Y13/0831/SH# - Stockbridge House Ashford Road Stockbridge Snave Ashford - Listed building consent for partial demolition and rebuild to include new foundations, and internal and external alterations

Y13/0886/SH - Flat 1 80 Bouverie Road West Folkestone Kent CT20 2PW - Felling of a Cypress tree situated within a conservation area

Y13/0773/SH+* - St Leonards Church Oak Walk Hythe Kent - Erection of glazed screen and railings to south porch and associated works.

Y13/0698/SH# - Land Adjoining 143 Queens Road Littlestone Kent - Erection of five-storey block of 14 apartments and lower ground floor office (Class B1(a)) space with associated access, parking and landscaping.

Y13/0499/SH* - 16 High Street New Romney Kent - Listed building consent for the demolition of derelict single storey motel building dating late 1950's early 1960's forming an extension to the main building, to enable commencement of development under planning ref: Y10/1080/SH.

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to planning@shepway.gov.uk. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

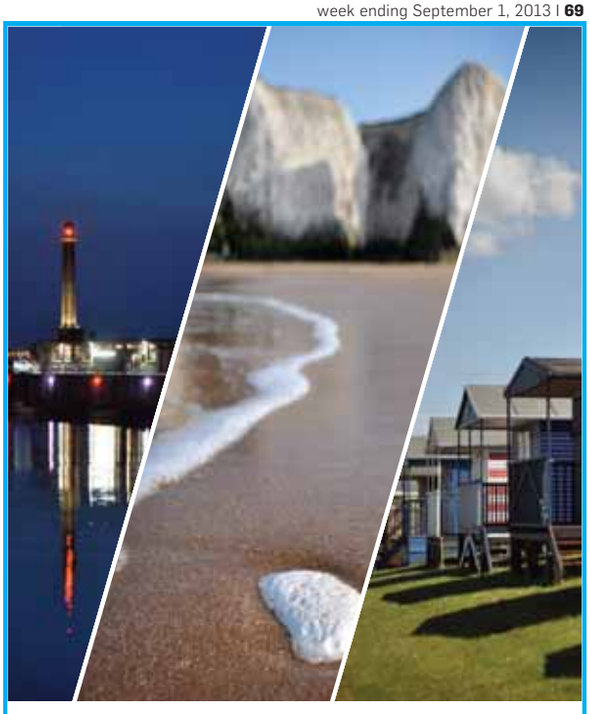
- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

+ - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/.

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning
Shepway District Council



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It's jobs for Kent

CRICKET

Talking cricket with Kent batsman Michael Powell

'Tis the season to be hired... or fired

KOS Media has teamed up with Kent batsman Michael Powell for a column throughout the 2013 season in which the Welshman will give an unrivalled insight into life on and off the pitch with the county.

THIS time of year it can be tiring, with all the work from pre-season on fitness now meaning nothing if you are not working towards anything.

This season is unlike last year, when we had everything to play for with a chance of going up in the four-day stuff. I think you could put this season down as a year of transition.

The players are now just working for their own self-respect. Teams that win have obviously got good team spirit, but to start that off you've got to win games.

Cricket is not a team sport in that respect – no one else can help when you're batting and bowling because you're on your own.

The individuals will learn lessons this year and come back better players. When you've got 11 good players and they are individually doing their own skills well, then the team will do well. You can't look at it as the team as a whole.

That's why England have backroom staff looking after the team to help them individually. It's nothing about the team. That's just the 11 who stick together – they're all mates, but it's about the individuals.

Kent's chance of winning anything ended when the floodlights failed against Warwickshire in the Yorkshire Bank 40 earlier this month, with Kent losing by seven runs via the Duckworth-Lewis method as the game was abandoned.

These things happen, but I've not had that happen to me before. There were plenty of streakers in Cardiff when I played for Glamorgan throughout my career.

In fact there was a good spate of them in the late 90s. I used to enjoy it when the stewards ran after them looking to get a good ankle-tap. But it's probably the wrong place to do a bit of streaking, in Wales, what with the stewards and their rugby background.

This time of year is also difficult for another reason, with players getting hired and fired – that's the cold, hard facts of the sport. There are people bowling and batting for their careers. There can be a lot of different emotions flying around a changing room.

If you're sacked or have just signed a new deal, you don't want to give too much away because your mate could be in a different situation. You can't be celebrating or looking glum. You've got to be grown up. It's a strange time of year.

I was sacked at Glamorgan. I was disappointed to be left out, but it freshened me up and I came to Kent, where I've enjoyed it.

Cricket is more ruthless than people might think. Players have bills and mortgages to pay, so you want to score runs and take wickets, not just for the team but for your future.

When people look at cricket, they might think it's awesome being a professional sportsman. Yes it is, but every year could be your last.

If you leave, you might have to get another job that's nothing to do with cricket – that's how it is.

DARTS

The Viking's preparing

By Greg Miles
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THE date was January 8, 2007, the time 5.45pm, and former world champion Andy 'The Viking' Fordham had drunk his last drink.

Told by doctors that his boozing was pushing him to the brink, he went dry in a battle that has gripped him and his family and seen him struggle in the game he loves.

The former Dartford and Thamesmead resident, who is coming to Margate for an exhibition match in October, collapsed backstage minutes before his opening-round match at the BDO World Championships at Lakeside in 2007.

Since then he has defected to the lesser-ranked PDC tournaments and won just £800 in a year in one of those seasons, dropping to 303 in the world rankings, but he is now dreaming of a Lakeside return in January 2015 for another shot at the BDO world title he won in 2004.

The Glasgow Rangers and Millwall fan openly admits it has been a roller-coaster ride since he was told he would need a liver transplant after his collapse, although the operation has been postponed since his change of habit.

"As sad as it sounds, I miss drink every day. I could quite easily go back. It's a continuous fight," he said.

The Greenwich resident's return is as much for his family as it is for himself, in particular for his one-year-old grandaughter, whom he hopes to make proud by getting back to the top.

"All I can tell them is certain things and show them things on the telly, but for them to come and see it, it would be brilliant," he said. "It would be great for the game as well, because I've had loads of support.

"I want to get myself sorted out fitness-wise and in January the year after I want to be back at Lakeside. The confidence is getting there massively – I know the darts is there, but it's down to the fitness."

The lack of alcohol on a game day, though, has had a big impact on his performance and left him open to back pain, which he feels was numbed by his former pre-match ritual.

"Where I don't drink and I know what I'm doing, it's not going the way I want it to," he said. "I've been playing players who a few years ago nine times out of 10 I would beat and they're kicking my backside – it's frustrating. The darts is coming back, though.

"I played in the PDC and, because there aren't so many players, the players they have got are quite strong. For me to build up my confidence, it wasn't happening. Going back to the BDO gave me the chance to build up my confidence.

"The last few tournaments I've been to, my back has been giving me trouble. I started doing exhibitions. I wanted to sit down for half an hour, but it doesn't work like that. If you're in pain, you can't concentrate and it doesn't work.

"I've had scans on my back and there's nothing. I've probably had it all my life, but I've found drink to be the best painkiller."

Fordham is getting help from former professional boxer Dave Walker, doing boxercise classes in a bid to drop down in weight, a process he went through on ITV's Celebrity Fit Club in 2005 alongside the likes of chef Aldo Zilli.

"I lost about three or four stone on Fit Club," he said. "If I had done it strictly, I could have lost more. I'm not as big now, but when I was ill I was 31 stone. In less than a year I was down to 16 stone. I looked horrible. People used to say 'You look well', but I had a mirror at home and I knew exactly how I looked."

Since then, he has put much of that weight back on and does not register on the scales at his gym.

"If I can get to 18 stone, I will be well happy with that, back to my fighting weight," he said. "Dave's scales only go up to 21 stone and I didn't register on that – I would have said I'm 25 stone.

"The thing is, there is a lazy 20 stone and a fit 20 stone. I don't think I would want to be skinny again – it would be a pain with all the birds and that for the missus!"

Since Fit Club and his subsequent ill-health, Fordham has had plenty of time to reflect on how his drinking impacted on his family, especially his wife Jenny.

"The biggest row we had was over half a lager shandy," he said. "We had a massive row – she was in tears and I was in tears. It was probably the biggest moment of that crisis. I realised the

Picture: LAWRENCE LUSTIG

ROAR TALENT: Michael van Gerwen

You can take on Andy and world No 2 in Margate

Andy Fordham and Michael van Gerwen will be showing off their skills in an exhibition match at Margate's Winter Gardens in October.

World number two van Gerwen, 24, is one of the sport's biggest emerging talents. The Dutchman gave Phil 'The Power' Taylor a run for his money in the BDO World Championship final earlier this year, leading 4-2 at one stage only to lose the next five as Taylor clinched his 16th world title 7-4.

He did get his revenge, though, in the BDO Premier League Darts, finishing top of the league – the first time in the competition's eight-year history it has had a winner other than Taylor.

On the night in Margate, all ticket-holders will be put into a draw to take to the stage and compete against the two stars with the arrows.

The event takes place on Friday, October 18, at 6pm. Tickets are priced at £20, or £40 for a VIP package.

Visit www.margatewintergardens.co.uk or phone 01843 296111 to book.

SPORTS SHORTS

CRICKET

Great Greenway stars as women take Ashes

WHILE Kent's male cricketers have endured a wretched season, two of the county's women players have shown them how it's done.

Captain Charlotte Edwards and Lydia Greenway rescued England Women from a parlous nine for three against Australia at the Ageas Bowl on Thursday evening as they chased down a target of 128 to win the 2nd Twenty20 and seal the Ashes series.

Greenway hit an unbeaten 80 from 64 balls and Edwards 24, the pair sharing a fourth-wicket partnership of 67 that steered England back on course just as nerves seemed to be getting the better of the home side.

FOOTBALL

Harriman to remain at Gills until season end

GILLINGHAM have sealed a deal with QPR for defender Michael Harriman to stay at Priestfield until the end of the season.

Gills boss Martin Allen said: "He has done very well in our team and he is a superb professional.

"We have also reached agreement with Charlton Athletic for a standard [three-month] loan for central midfielder Danny Hollands.

"I am delighted that he has chosen to come to us – he has been successful at this level and he will definitely help our team.

"He will go into our squad for Saturday's game [August 31] versus Bristol City."

HOCKEY

Heroine Hinch named keeper of the Euros

IT was penalty heartache – at the hands of the Germans – for England Women in this year's EuroHockey final, but there was a special moment for Kent's Maddie Hinch, who was named goalkeeper of the tournament.

Hinch, who plays for Holcombe, was in the thick of the action as the championship reached its thrilling climax.

She was the heroine in the semi-final against The Netherlands when she saved four of six Dutch penalties in the shoot-out after a 1-1 draw but couldn't stop the Germans taking the title with a 2-0 penalty success following a pulsating 4-4 draw in the match itself.

to reconquer the darts world

Picture: HANS WILLINK

CLEAR AIM: Andy Fordham is targeting a return to Lakeside in January 2015

ANDY 'S HONOURS

2004
Lakeside World Championship

2003
International Darts League • British Pentathlon

2002
World Darts Trophy • Welsh Open

2001
WDF World Cup

2000
Norway Open

1999
World Masters

1998
WDF Europe Cup • British Pentathlon

1995
Norway Open • Isle Of Man Open • British Matchplay

1994
Swiss Open • Finnish Open

only person to blame for it was me. Everything I did, alcohol was an excuse. I would drink four hours before flying because I was nervous – once I started, I was off. I would be up at 4am to drink before a radio interview at 6am. I realised and I changed totally.

"The worst thing that happened to me was the first time I was on TV I drank shedloads. The trouble was, it worked, so I thought I had to do it every time. I had to drink the right brandy and Holsten Pils.

"One thing I never was, was a nasty drunk. I used to drink a hell of a lot, but people wouldn't realise I had been drinking.

"They reckon one day I had 60-odd bottles of Pils, then spirits after that. It was one of those things. I'm not proud of it. I was a different type of athlete.

"One thing people should realise when you've drunk like that is it's your family who suffer terribly. The tablets they put me on made me a miserable git. I was horrible. It was just through something I didn't really need."

That support from family and friends saved him from becoming another George Best or Paul Gascoigne, comparisons that were made at the time of his hospitalisation.

"Their names kept coming up when I was in hospital," said Fordham. "They go in a pub and people try to force drink down them, but I've been lucky. My missus Jenny has stuck with me through a lot. I've had all that support."

It is a sad tale that Fordham's only memories of his big matches come from trawling through his scrapbooks made by his dad, or by watching DVDs and videos with his family, as what happened on those evenings has been lost to drink.

"People say things about being in a certain pub and I say I don't remember going to the town, let alone the pub. Those days are in the past now.

"There are things in the scrapbook I can't remember, like the World Championship final. I don't remember the venue, going on stage or getting the trophy.

"In the paper it says in the break that the two players went into the back room – one played darts and the other had a few large brandies and bottles of Pils. I know which one was me now.

"I've watched it back on DVD and it looks like I enjoyed myself. That's a shame, really – one of the biggest moments of my life and I can't remember it."

Reminiscing is fine, but there is no point dwelling on the past for Fordham.

"It's nobody's fault but my own. The truth is I was lucky because I was always fit and a good-looking chap. There's only one person who's ruined it all and that's me. People say to me 'If you could go back, would you?'. But you can't go back. Trying to think of things like that is pointless. I can't change anything I've done."

The 51-year-old paints a very different picture of himself as a youngster to the man we know today.

"My dad didn't drink, my mum never drank," he said. "I used to be really fit. I used to run for the school, play football. I had a nickname – the whippet. But with the people I hung around with, if you could go in the pub and get a drink it was a massive thing on your CV.

"I looked old enough when I was 14. I just wanted to get drunk as soon as I could."

Fordham is genuinely appreciative and surprised at the continued support he has from fans given the time he has been out of the limelight.

"I haven't been on telly now since I was ill in 2007, but I walk around with people who are on TV and people want my picture. I get quite embarrassed at times," he said.

"I think it's because I am who I am – I don't try to be any different. I've seen what's happened to some of them who've made a few quid, but I'm not going to start knocking players."

Picture: ANDY KELLY

UP AND AWAY: Shakey Byrne climbs into The Mountain at Cadwell Park

Shakey is keeping calm

SITTINGBOURNE rider Shane 'Shakey' Byrne remains confident despite having his lead in the British Superbike Championship cut at Lincolnshire's Cadwell Park on Monday.

Alex Lowes, who won both of Monday's races, is eight podium credits and 37 points behind Byrne, but the Kent man's finishes of second and fourth mean he is still strong favourite to clinch the title at Donington, Leicestershire, on Sunday, September 8, before the end-of-season Showdown.

Byrne said: "I've never had much luck at Cadwell Park, but to even get to race this year was a bonus after what happened last year. I was happy enough with the pace in the opening race, but we tried a change for race two and it simply didn't work, so I'm a little frustrated to concede some ground to Alex.

"We will check the data to find out what we need to do as I really need to maximise my advantage at Donington Park before the Showdown starts."

Rapid Solicitors Kawasaki team chief Paul Bird said: "You can't win them all and it wasn't to be our weekend at Cadwell.

"Shakey rode a sensible race and kept out of trouble in race one, but he had a problem in race two, which handicapped him. But at least he didn't crash, unlike some of his rivals, and still has a good lead in the championship."

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